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THE NATION

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Politics or Soap Opera?

THE SEARCH FOR A MAN NAMED CARTER

HARRY S. ASHMORE

Britain's Polarizing Nightmare

DAVID J. SCHEFFER

On a Wasting Planet
THE NATIONAL IMPERATIVE TO PLAN

OTIS L. GRAHAM Jr.

Reviews of the Latest Fiction of

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LETTERS

if Henry Wallace had won

Evanston, Ill.

In his letter [*The Nation*, Oct. 9] commenting on Victor Navasky's review of Richard Walton's *Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and the Cold War* [*The Nation*, Sept. 11], Peter Connolly wrote, "By 1948 [Henry] Wallace was a fellow traveler and the Progressive Party a Communist front."

My research for *Gideon's Army*, a three-volume history of the Progressive Party and the 1948 campaign, decidedly contradicted this statement. The Communists were latecomers on the P.P. bandwagon. They had not favored its formation because Marxist ideology is that third-party movements originate with the proletariat, not the middle and upper classes to whom Wallace appealed. Once involved many Communists became "eager beavers" as they engaged in grass-roots campaigning, but at no time did Communists come close to controlling policy making.

The Progressive Party grew out of heartsick distress by millions over the postwar abandonment by Harry Truman of the policies of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In the beginning it had widespread support in labor and liberal ranks. Had the election been held early in 1948 it probably would have polled 8 million to 10 million votes. Frightened by the election to Congress of Wallace supporter Leo Isacson in a Bronx by-election in February, the redbaiters went to work viciously. By smear, economic and social pressure and violence, they drove away millions. It took great courage to stand up against the persecutors. . . .

As Lillian Hellman relates in *Scoundrel Time* most liberal leaders became chicken-hearted and even turned to redbaiting themselves. Americans for Democratic Action had a loyalty oath before Truman ordered one for federal employees in March 1947. Labor unions, school authorities, veterans' groups and businesses purged their ranks of suspects. Richard M. Freeland in *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism* describes the extent to which anti-Soviet scare propaganda was used to obtain support for Truman's foreign policy. . . .

That policy was consistent with Henry Luce's dream of *An American Century*, which Henry Wallace denounced in his *The Century of the Common Man*. Luce, before Pearl Harbor, said that win, lose or draw, the British Empire was through and it was the United States' turn to run the world. Clare Boothe Luce termed Wallace's reply "globaloney" and charged that Henry wanted to give a quart of milk daily to every Hottentot.

If Henry Wallace had been elected President the entire worldwide situation would be different today. Harry Truman is being recalled as a President who "got things done." Yes, and every important decision he made was wrong. Today we are paying the price. The cold war with its redbaiting and witch hunting to stifle opposition came to be called McCarthyism and culminated in Watergate. Today the machinations of the FBI, CIA and other agencies to subvert American democracy are becoming known and it is possible—nay, essential—to re-examine the circumstances which led to our getting into such a situation. It's up to historians like Richard Walton to do the job as it is quite apparent that neither major political party candidate for the Presidency possesses the knowledge or perspective for the re-education of the American people.

Curtis D. MacDougall
Professor Emeritus of Journalism
Northwestern University

correction

Through an error in transmission, Hilary Boyle was made to say in "To Melt a Heart of Stone" [*The Nation*, Oct. 2] that when she went from Dublin to Derry last September it was her first trip there in more than eight years. In fact, she had not been north for eight months.

The Editors

EDITORIALS

Mendicants and Millionaires

Too little money was spent in this year's Presidential campaign. That statement may seem strange just an election after the one in which Nixon's gang shook down corporate America like a Mafia family making the rounds of the dry-cleaning establishments. But some of the oddities of this electoral exercise stem directly from the fact that in 1976 the "reforms" of the federal law allowed only $43.6 million to be spent promoting the two major party candidates, as against the approximately $100 million the two candidates spent in 1972.

How many of our readers have seen even one bumper sticker this season? Who has rubbed elbows at a fundraiser since the primary season ended? How many stamps have been licked, doorbells rung, coffees poured, posters hung, leaflets handed out? The answer in all these categories of citizen participation is . . . very few. The way the campaigns of both candidates have been run has made it almost impossible for activists to act, ward heelers to heel or plain citizens to have any role in the political process. The candidates have put their money where the hungry mouth of the TV tube is, buying all that expensive advertising because they think it is "cost-effective" and spending the rest rushing around the land in jet planes to stage media events (they used to be called speeches) to get free "exposure."

The dollar amounts allocated for the large states by the national campaigns tell the story: for Carter $280,000 for California, $200,000 for New York, $100,000 for New Jersey, and so on up and down the line. The sums are barely enough for skeleton staffs, not enough for phone banks, inadequate for even one mass mailing. Get-out-the-vote drives are out, registration drives are hampered, and the whole array of activities that involve citizens in the act of politics are almost nonexistent. The money, say the managers, has to go for selling the President and the aspirant, and that means making clever "buys" of broadcast time, as if soap, cars or deodorants were being sold instead of the chief magistracy in a democracy.

None of this is to say that the old system was a good one. The unlimited amounts spent, the unrestricted contributions of the fatter cats, and all the attendant corruption of that vast political grab bag are hardly subjects for nostalgia. In the climax attained by Maurice Stans's vast vacuum cleaner for money, both dirty and "laundered," it was a thoroughly nasty business that was perfected for Nixon in 1972.

As often happens in this country, however, the "reform" stimulated by Watergateism has gone too far, and in the wrong directions. The amount allowed for a Presidential campaign was set too low to mount a campaign that would allow the candidates to tell their stories in this large country. The regulations controlling the collection of money during the pre-convention period and the expenditure of the federal funds for the national campaign were of such complexity that they paralyzed normal political activity and cost each campaign about 5 per cent of the total for sheer accounting and administration. In

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the process, popular participation in the campaign was cut down to the point where it amounted only to playing extras in crowd scenes staged by advance men for "media events" starring the remote candidates. All this adds up to a farce if not a travesty of any serious idea of popular democracy.

We have been discussing the Presidential campaign, but it is as bad, if not worse, in the elections to both bodies of Congress. The present law restricts the amount individuals can contribute to those campaigns—unless the individual is the candidate. The result of that gaping loophole has been that 1976 has produced a bumper crop of millionaire candidates for Congress, spending money of their own as if it were the funny stuff.

A few, like Howard Metzenbaum running for the Senate in Ohio (against Taft, another millionaire), have voluntarily limited their generosity toward themselves. But we have the spectacle of a Heinz in Pennsylvania spending huge amounts to sell himself as the 58th appetizing variety and a Buckley in New York casting his father's oil upon the electoral waters, to name just two of the big spenders. In state politics, there is the amazing spectacle in West Virginia of the earnest Jay Rockefeller buying the Democratic nomination for Governor for $1.6 million, or roughly $8.85 per vote (a sum that would have shocked the late Joseph P. Kennedy, who was much more frugal in similarly advancing the cause of his son John in the primary of 1960, which knocked Hubert Humphrey out of the race).

Congress is already loaded with millionaires, some of them quite estimable by chance. *The New York Times* has published a survey showing that twenty-two of the current 100 Senators are seven-figure men and the House has a most disproportionate number of millionaires. This age can hardly be called Gilded; it is very different from the turn-of-the-century period when Mark Hanna and Nelson Aldrich pulled the political strings or strode the stage of public life. But sheer wealth, private and corporate, has probably never played such an important role in the nation's collective business. And unless the law is changed to restrict the use of personal fortunes in politics, Congress could become just a rich man's club, utterly unrepresentative.

As for the corporate world, it got off to a late start in its intervention in politics this year, largely because the Federal Election Commission's rules on corporate Political Action Committees (PACs) were promulgated late in the season. But, despite this handicap, the corporations have made up for lost time and the business world's PACs are at least twice as numerous this year as they were in 1972. The contention of the "interests," as they used to be called, is that they have to intervene to try to match the political muscle of the labor unions. That is like saying that Goliath was a pitiful, helpless giant, but it suits businessmen to portray themselves as underdogs, however ridiculous the claim.

And so the Presidential campaign, supposedly sterilized from the evil effects of money-grubbing, is underfinanced, and the Congressional contests give a huge advantage to the very rich. In both cases a decent and sensible political process is badly distorted. All the free time on the air for the so-called Presidential debates (really joint press

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conferences suffering from all the limitations of that form of communication) does not make up for a system that has so drastically reduced popular participation.

Next year Congress should put the whole scheme back on the drawing board. It should substantially raise the sums allowed for Presidential campaigns. It should encourage participation by extending the matching-funds principle of the primary season into the general election. It should raise the contribution limit (now $1,000) for Congressional races and limit the amount of personal money individuals can spend on their own contests, in order to equalize matters. It should simplify the controls on spending and make political sense out of the whole arrangement for conducting elections.

The drab and distorted campaign of 1976 should not be repeated.

Brother Mole

Fascinating skirmishes in court—which may lead to landmark decisions on the scope of civil liberties in the United States—continue to take place in the three-year suit of the Socialist Workers Party against the FBI. The latest involves the use of "informers," those government spies the FBI has sprinkled so liberally among political groups whose opinions the G-men dislike.

Details of the FBI's "investigation" of the SWP are by now well known to *Nation* readers (see particularly Walter and Miriam Schneir's "Square Target of the FBI," September 25). The investigation has supposedly been halted by order of Attorney General Levi, relayed to agents by FBI Director Clarence Kelley. But in the light of Kelley's pledge to keep an eye on party members who are "likely to use force of violence in violation of federal law," and in view of the bureau's admission that it has sixty-six informants within the party, the SWP is understandably skeptical. It has demanded in court that the informers be identified.

To that demand the FBI responded last week with frantic wringing of hands. "What is at stake on this motion," wailed the bureau in a court memo, "is nothing less than the ability of the FBI . . . to obtain information which is vitally necessary to the continued performance of their duties." (The duties, of course, consist of domestic political espionage.) A high-level FBI spokesman claimed that already, because of the threat to confidentiality growing out of the suit, twenty informers have broken with the bureau and many others have "simply ceased to provide adequate information."

A glimpse into the underground activity of these presumably patriotic moles, who number about 1,500 according to a Congressional inquiry, is afforded by the 2,000-page file on one Timothy Redfearn, which was previously released to the SWP. During the four years that Redfearn informed for the bureau's Denver office, he burglarized SWP offices with the FBI's approval, performed seven nonpolitical burglaries of which the bureau was aware, and spent a month under psychiatric care in a mental hospital.

For the FBI a vital principle is at stake in the SWP suit, but the rest of us can only be pleased that fearful informers are dropping out of circulation, thus hampering the bureau's repellent work as a political police force. And a court decision to unveil all the Timothy Redfearns within the SWP would be a giant victory for everyone who cares about the Constitution. As the ACLU declared in its policy statement denouncing the use of informers, "The use of police spies offends the fundamental notion that citizens have the right to associate among themselves to achieve social or political objectives in which they believe without interference by the government."

'The Cuba Trap'

The Nation was the first American publication to carry a report on the secret base which the CIA had set up near Retalhuleu in Guatemala to train guerrillas for the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion (see our issue of November 19, 1960). Our source was Ronald Hilton, then director, Institute of Hispanic American Studies at Stanford University. Later Hilton wrote a piece, "The Cuba Trap" (*The Nation*, April 29, 1961), in which he foresaw that the Bay of Pigs fiasco would sour U.S.-Cuban relations for a generation. Fifteen years have passed and relations show no sign of improvement; in fact they have recently taken a turn for the worse.

On October 6 a bomb exploded on a Cubana Airlines jet shortly after takeoff from the Barbados airport. In an angry funeral oration for the seventy-three civilians who died in the crash, Fidel Castro formally denounced the anti-hijacking accord which this country had negotiated with Cuba in 1973. As Castro sees it, the CIA is responsible for the explosion, and it is easy to understand why he should have jumped to that conclusion. He knows for a fact that the CIA attempted on several occasions to bring about his assassination and information of that sort unsteadies one's judgment if not one's nerves. But while he almost certainly drew the wrong inference, he cited in his speech a series of acts which make out a compelling case that a terrorist campaign is in fact being directed against his regime. He mentioned, for example, the April 22nd bombing of the Cuban Embassy in Portugal, the July 5th attack with explosives on the Cuban Mission at the U.N., the July 9th explosion of a bomb in a wagon carrying luggage to a Cuban plane about to leave a Jamaican airport, the July 23rd killing of a man during an attempt to kidnap the Cuban consul in Mérida, Mexico, and the August 18th explosion of a bomb in the Cuban airlines Panama office. Castro blames most of these acts on anti-Castro Cuban groups which, he says, "act freely and with impunity within the United States" and include in their ranks men who have had close ties with the CIA. During a recent speech, Prime Minister Forbes Burnham of Guyana repeated the same charges in a slightly different form. An investigation of the October 6th crash has resulted in the arrest of sixteen Cuban exiles in Venezuela and the discovery of links described by *The New York Times* "as embarrassing to the governments of the United States and Venezuela." In fact the Venezuelan Government concedes that a group of anti-Castro Cubans have recently plotted a "vast" number of terrorist acts in this hemisphere.

So patently there is substance to Castro's charges that terrorist actions have been plotted and carried out by

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Cuban enemies of his regime under the shelter of asylum provided by the governments of the United States and Venezuela. Given this country's involvement through the CIA in such activities in the past, it is clearly incumbent on Washington to convince Castro that we have neither directly nor indirectly instigated these latest attacks. The way to do this would be to crack down on terrorist groups operating in this country. The FBI and the CIA are said to be investigating the activities of anti-Castro Cuban groups, but the past involvement of both agencies with these same elements may well inhibit the vigor of such investigations and might be cited to discredit their findings. The crackdown is long overdue. By inference, the recent upsurge in terrorist acts could be aimed at disrupting any move by this country to recognize the Castro regime; if so, more attacks of the same kind can be anticipated. And there is a real danger that the anti-hijacking agreement will lapse before Castro is persuaded to drop his idea that we have inspired the current rash of terrorism.

A recent article from Havana by Ian Glass of the *Los Angeles Times* suggests that normalization of relations with Cuba might be possible some time soon. Castro is making every effort to encourage tourism. The Riviera Hotel has had a $5 million face-lift. Some twenty-three new hotels of 200 to 300 rooms each have been completed and thirty-six more are scheduled for the next five years. Tourists are flocking in from Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, and from Canada to take advantage of the low-cost charter flights. Despite the U.S. economic blockade, Americans are beginning to arrive in sizable numbers and are "welcomed with smiles."

There is an old 1918 statute against trading with "the enemy"—currently, our enemies are Cuba and Rhodesia—but Washington officials are not seeking to enforce it against tourists. Americans simply fly to Kingston and catch the afternoon plane for Havana. More to the point, many American corporations are doing a thriving business in Cuba through Spanish, British and Argentine connections, while Washington keeps up the pretense of non-intercourse. Against this background, it would seem that both Cuba and the United States would benefit from the early normalization of relations and that this should be a priority objective, as Carl Rowan notes in a recent column, of "whatever government is elected in November." But for the moment we are still caught in "the Cuba trap," the prisoner of past mistakes and misconceptions and it may well take us a full generation, as Ronald Hilton predicted, to do the obvious and recognize the Castro government. CAREY MCWILLIAMS

Sensitive Plants

American "intelligence" agents are apparently so skillful that they could record conversations in the Seoul Blue House in which President (read Dictator) Park Chung Hee personally ordered the Korean CIA to bribe American members of Congress. *The Washington Post* has been running a series of stories about the activities of one Park Tong Sun, a Korean businessman who seems to have a lock on the U.S. rice trade with South Korea, and the allegation is that President Park ordered his namesake to distribute some of his profits on this business to our lawmakers.

The story fits a pattern. Hardly a month goes by without some new evidence that the U.S. spy system is still totally out of control, despite all the Congressional investigations and the veneer of a control system that has been thinly applied over its seamy surface. The double-Park KCIA scandal is just the latest to emerge.

The point of all this lies in the incredible degree of interpenetration of our intelligence services with those of dictatorships around the world. It is theoretically done in the name of "national security," but the effect is to involve our government and theirs in corrupt joint operations. One sentence in the *Post* story of October 27 suggests the whole sordid story. It quotes an "informed source" as saying that the means used to get the Park-and-Congress information are so "sensitive" that the intelligence agencies "have not fully cooperated in turning all this information over to Justice Department investigators."

The murder by bomb of Orlando Letelier, the exiled Chilean diplomat, and his American assistant Ronni Moffitt, was committed several weeks ago and there is still no sign American authorities have made progress in finding the bombers. Too "sensitive," probably.

Five-Sided Serenity

In one of his wittier essays, the late Dean Acheson took off from a wistful statement by then President Eisenhower that he wished he just had time to sit back and think about the country's real problems. Acheson's point was that statesmen, or their approximations, are harmless enough if they just act, but if they pretend to think about what they do, we are all in big trouble.

Now we learn that it is not just thinking that we must fear from our public officials but, of all things, meditation. *The New York Times* ran a story (October 26) which said that the federal government has "some 1,000 meditators" in its ranks, at least fifteen of them in Congress. The figures may be a little suspect since they come from an outfit with a stake in transcendental musing called the American Foundation for the Science of Creative Intelligence, but they are not incredible, given the estimate that 850,000 Americans practice this Eastern art.

The *Times* story suggests that meditation is rife in the Pentagon, with many a military bureaucrat, in uniform or mufti, turning his chair to the wall at noontime to give himself over to "free-flow meditation that is said to dissolve stress and fatigue." We will note without comment that "stress" is what the military is engaged in and that "fatigue" is what soldiers perform as a duty or wear as a work uniform. And it is hard to imagine meditation as a discipline of the sort military men practice and revere.

Meditation is a peaceful form of thinking, at any rate, and perhaps therefore a good thing even for fighting men, better, from our point of view, than fiercely competitive sports. For the Pentagon meditators around budget time we have a suggestion or two for a mantra—"*Beee-Wun*" has a good resonance and "*b-i-l-l-i-o-n-s*" has a better ring to it than the omnipresent "*om*."

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UNDER THE HAMMER OF THE POUND

Britain's Polarizing Nightmare

DAVID J. SCHEFFER

> Britain has now come to the end of the present road. . . . I hope that this country will realize that once again I am telling to them the truth. —*Edward Heath*

Oxford

The only British politician whose rhetoric merits special attention is Enoch Powell, and then only because it is singularly repulsive. But on October 6, former Prime Minister Edward Heath rose before the Conservative Party Conference and, in a remarkably well-phrased manner, set adrift the era of "Collectivist" politics. While Heath stole the headlines for his strained endorsement of Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, who succeeded him almost two years ago after a bitter contest for the party leadership, he also crystallized the historic transformation occurring in British politics. The postwar tendency in Britain to bury ideological hatchets under the banner of the Welfare State and the Managed Economy is now gone. After three years of convulsive behavior, the Labour and Conservative Parties have swung as far Left and as far Right as it takes to resurrect the ideologies of the past. Labour, regardless of Prime Minister James Callaghan's short-term "Tory" management of the economy, is once again a *real* Socialist party. And the Conservatives have reasserted their moth-balled anti-Socialist philosophy with an almost comic Churchillian aggressiveness.

Ever since 1950, the Labour and Conservative Parties during election duels had increasingly converged with regard to social and economic priorities. Both parties, led by Labour, accepted the administrative requirements of what have been termed the Welfare State and the Managed Economy. They officially regarded unemployment as the primary target of any government. Ideological differences tended to become blurred behind what R.T. McKenzie in 1958 called the "collective pursuit of power." During the 1960s, the ideological gap between the two parties narrowed still further; at times party leaders even embraced their opponents' philosophies. The Labour Left, with its passion for nationalization, disappeared from sight. Prime Minister Harold Wilson had to accept the Tory "facts of life" and protect the pound at the expense of unemployment. The Conservative government of Harold Macmillan dared to introduce a short-lived national economic planning scheme. By the end of the decade, political differences were of a managerial, not ideological, nature.

But the economic crises that have racked Britain since 1973 finally culminated this year in a definitive ideological break between Labour and the Conservatives. Nowhere has this been more evident than at the recent party conferences in Blackpool and Brighton.

September 27 through October 8 were crucial days for politicians and financiers alike. On the 28th, the second day of the Labour Party Conference at Blackpool, the pound suddenly plummeted from $1.68 to $1.63. Even while Prime Minister Callaghan vainly tried to convince the Labour delegates of the need to encourage profits in the private sector of industry, the pound fell 2¢. His was a courageous but embarrassing speech, pragmatic and yet so contrary to his party's slide to the Left. Some members of the Labour national executive committee sweated out the final, meager applause with clasped hands.

The day after Callaghan's exclamation that, "For too long this country has trodden the primrose path and borrowed money from abroad to maintain our standards of living, instead of grappling with the fundamental problems of British industry," Denis Healey, Chancellor of the Exchequer, flew to Blackpool. He admitted to the delegates that, once again, the government was forced to seek a massive loan from the International Monetary Fund, this time "not to finance more spending, public or private but to protect our industrial strategy from speculative attacks on sterling. . . ." They received him with shouts of "Tory!" and "Resign!" Then the conference overwhelmingly approved of plans to nationalize Britain's seven leading insurance companies, the "big four" clearing banks and a merchant bank. Thus the manifesto of the Labour Party for the next general election will advocate raiding London's financial bastions. This was too much for Callaghan, who made clear his disapproval.

The man who fired up the delegates was Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for Energy. As Ronald Butt of *The Times* of London concluded, Benn observed "the minimal rules necessary for survival inside the government. . . . He is, no doubt, happy enough to know that nothing has happened this week to weaken the sentimental links between himself and an increasingly left-wing conference which one day may have a decisive voice in the determination of the Labour leader." It was Benn's task to urge the conference to adopt *Labour's Programme 1976*, a blatantly Socialist blueprint for the government. Benn's own fervor for the document proved contagious. He was cheered loudly for such statements as, "We utterly reject the campaign waged day in and day out by business, the Tory press and media, that the present crisis is due to a failure of the working people of Britain. For too long they have been set up as a scapegoat for the true failure, which is a failure of British capitalism." He continued, "In addition to the economic price we are paying, the conference must face the fact that as a party we are also paying a heavy political price for the twenty years in which we have, as a party, played down our criticism of capitalism and soft-pedaled our advocacy of socialism."

The *Programme*, one of the most radical Socialist statements of party policy since the late 1940s, was thrust

David Scheffer, a Knox Fellow from Harvard, is studying law at Oxford.

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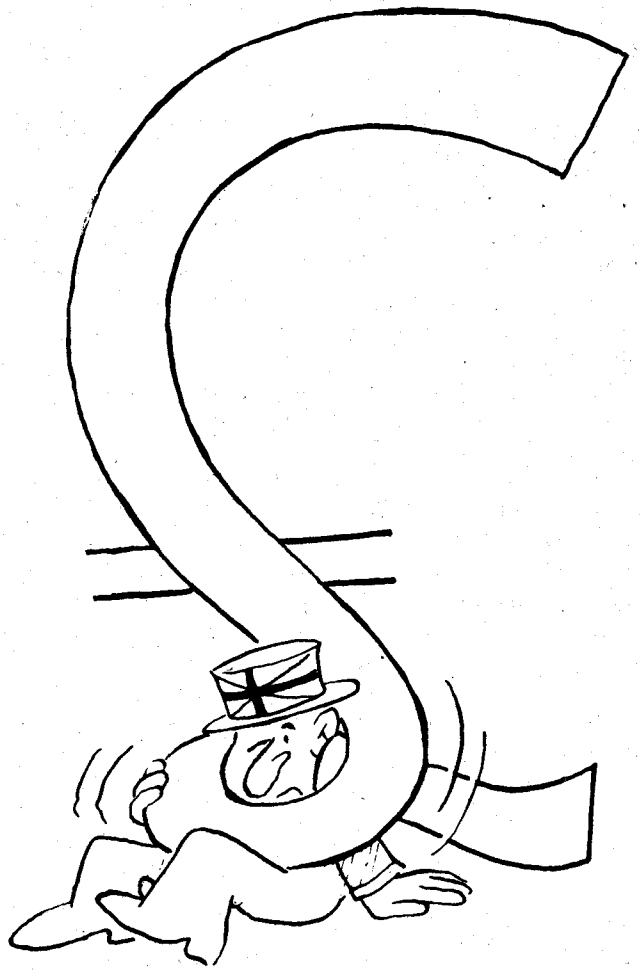
upon the delegates and enthusiastically consumed. It is a document which in England has far more influence on party policy than do the comparable platforms vaguely recognized by Democratic and Republican politicians. Labour prides itself, at least rhetorically, on sticking to the promises it makes, and the *Programme* is ignored by the party leaders at their peril. One left-wing M.P. who helped draft it said, "Out of this document will come our manifesto for the next election. We intend to stick rigidly to that manifesto." The *Programme*'s introduction states the case concisely: "Our programme is founded on the principles of democracy and socialism. At its heart is a basic Socialist priority: to bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favor of working people and their families."

Especially on the subject of public expenditure, the *Programme* chides the government (i.e., the party's own leaders) for "no growth" programs projected up to 1980. The delegates even passed a special resolution on the first day of the conference which urges the party to campaign against cuts in public expenditure (recently imposed by the government against heavy left-wing opposition in Parliament) and supports Labour councils which refused to make any. And, terror of terrors, an entire 16 pages advocates an enormous attempt at economic planning, including a national economic and industrial plan, a National Planning Commission, and public ownership of growth industries in order to "fulfill our Socialist objectives."

The one Labour M.P. who dared attack the *Programme* in toto no longer has any real future in the party and almost certainly none in the government. Reginald Prentice, berated Minister for Overseas Development, accused the party's national executive of avoiding any meaningful discussion about the battle against inflation or the future of incomes policy for fear of antagonizing the trade unions, which are the most powerful pressure groups influencing Labour policy. He said, "The unions deserve every credit for operating restraint on incomes since the summer of last year. But the future cannot be left entirely in their hands. A major political party, aiming to provide a blueprint for the future, ought to put forward a few ideas of its own. . . . The plain fact is that we shall not be able to afford these [proposals for extra public spending]." In his opinion, the national executive was with Alice in Wonderland.

Callaghan now must muddle his way through party policy that reeks of the left-wing activism quickly overtaking Labour, especially at the constituency level. The Left's parliamentary instrument, the large Tribune Group, increasingly espouses Marxist strategies; on one occasion last spring it hysterically sang *The Red Flag* and waved one from the back benches after enraging Conservative M.P.s over a nationalization bill. These members are also constantly thwarting Callaghan's "Tory" attempts to save the economy from collapse—the reasons being, as a Tribune M.P. told me, that "Callaghan is something of a right-wing extremist. He got the post [Prime Minister] because he never really broadcast his political views; he didn't appear opportunistic. He was great with administrative decisions, never offending anyone. But he's the type that would never resign on a matter of principle. Now he's becoming more authoritarian. The men we admire are those who clearly stand for something, like Tony Benn." The Labour Party is shifting Left in a very fundamental way, and the more Callaghan antagonizes his Socialist militants, the louder they shout. His incapacity to govern in such a situation is forcing speculation that a general election may occur, as the Conservatives hope, within six months.

The Tory response to Labour's predicament has been just as extreme. But in contrast to the intraparty conflicts at Blackpool, the Conservative delegates meeting at Brighton appeared unified for the first time since 1974. The popularity of the party's statement of aims, entitled *The Right Approach*, was evident from the beginning. Speaker after speaker vigorously asserted its ideological divergence from the *Programme*, described in the Tory statement



Bas, Tachydromos (Greece)

itself as "a programme far more Marxist than anything on which the Italian Communist Party dared to fight in its last election campaign." On almost every major issue of public policy, the Conservatives approved right-wing, anti-Socialist and, most important, anti-compromise "aims." This is not to say that most of the views expressed in *The Right Approach* had not been voiced by Tories before the conference, but the document accomplishes two immediate tasks.

First, it prudently, albeit curtly, accounts for the de-

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bacle of February 1974, when Heath challenged the coal miners and imposed a three-day work week. That, and Heath's second defeat in October 1974, caused his downfall, and he has felt insulted ever since. Thus it was important that *The Right Approach* pat him on the back. Though he professed to have some reservations, he did not find himself "in major disagreement with it. . . ." Certainly he was pleased with the document's admission that, "The three-day week was quickly seen to have caused far less damage than was at one time feared. The people had begun to perceive that some sacrifices were necessary. With honest and courageous leadership they could have been brought to face the painful adjustments that were needed." If not Heath himself, at least his supporters could feel at one with the party again.

Secondly, *The Right Approach* organizes into an ideological club what had formerly been a jumble of "free enterprise" positions as incoherent as those espoused by the Republican Party or, for that matter, the Democrats. While studded with all-purpose phrases like "common sense" and the "Tory facts of life," *The Right Approach* still succeeds in shifting the Conservatives so far Right that the common *approach* to public policy evidenced by Labour and Tory for almost a quarter century has collapsed.

On the first day of the conference, Sir Geoffrey Howe, shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, received a standing ovation after emphasizing in his speech the party's commitment to tax relief and massive public expenditure cuts. "So, let us hear less of the argument that government spending saves jobs, less of the question, where would you cut? Let us get back to asking the only sensible question, what can we afford? . . . We cannot afford to go on building endless subsidized council houses when more people would prefer help to buy their own homes. We cannot afford to nationalize aircraft and shipbuilding, to nationalize land, the insurance companies and the banks. We cannot afford socialism." What brought the delegates to their feet were these words: "The real risk of tyranny in this country comes from the Marxist Left of [Callaghan's] Socialist Party. . . . [T]his country must now undergo a deep-seated change if we are to preserve our freedom and restore our prosperity, and undergo that change before it is too late. [The people] sense that British democratic socialism has run its course. So far from being the wave of the future, it turns out to be the flotsam of the past."

One of the clearest divergences evident throughout the conference was the Conservative disdain for Labour's "social contract" with the trade unions. Michael Heseltine, perhaps the most charismatic M.P. on the Tory front bench, drew the line. He delivered a lengthy statement of specific economic policies the Conservatives would pursue if in power. Amost all of them ran directly counter to both the Labour government and the *Programme*. They were geared exclusively toward the "success" of the free enterprise system, encouraging investment and profits. Heseltine asserted that nationalization, high taxation, the egalitarian elimination of reward, and the consolidation of power in trade unions were the essence of the social contract. He exclaimed, "That is why it is not a social contract. It is a Socialist contract negotiated by Socialist trade union leaders with a Socialist government to impose socialism on a non-Socialist Britain." (*Loud applause.*) James Prior, the chief opposition spokesman on employment, extended an olive branch to the trade union leaders but warned them that their concept of the social contract "is bad for Parliament; bad for the nation and, in the end, bad for the unions too. . . . We respect their views and their right to be heard on matters that affect their membership, but . . . it is when they speak as Socialist politicians we have a right to remind them that they are not the government."

Edward Heath is not a particularly engaging man. He certainly considers himself an elder statesman, aloof from his party's daily struggles. His appearance is impeccable, with a face so stern and downcast (but beautifully tanned) that to look him in the eye makes you feel guilty either about yourself or about him, for reasons that only he must know. Heath and company continue to perpetuate an Etonian image of pomposity and condescension in the Conservative Party. (I will never forget one of his protégés being mocked on the floor of the Commons by a Labour M.P. who indulged himself in the accusation, "Heil Hitler!") His entrance in the conference hall became an event in itself, with Mrs. Thatcher scurrying to his side for a few "unity" photographs. What followed, however, was more than just a show.

Heath's speech anointed the Conservatives with the will to *oppose*. While addressing himself "to the whole British people," Heath was unmistakably a Tory, and his party took the cue. The delegates salivated for the word, "Go." When they heard it, the humiliation and confusion of the last three years seemed behind them. Heath tactlessly had broken with the postwar convergence in February 1974 and he finally could admit that his party had done so, tactfully, in October 1976. They once again shared a common ideology, the "truth," as defined by Edward Heath:

> The crunch so long awaited, so often discussed, is now upon us. . . . What I am saying to you now is that the prime consideration in all our actions and policy in this country must be the maintenance of the external value of the pound. [*Shouts of "Hear, hear!"*] . . . [T]he policies which will have to be pursued will be hard, and a very large number—many, many innocent people who have no direct responsibility for this state of affairs and no indirect responsibility—will suffer hardship. . . . I have complete confidence that they will be taken by Margaret Thatcher and by her colleagues on the platform. . . . [W]hen are we as a country going to get up and go? That is what the rest of the world is asking. Once again, it is we Conservatives who can show the way, because the standards I have been describing to you are the standards of every Conservative.

The external value of the pound, the necessary hardship imposed on innocent (i.e., working-class) people, the esteem of the rest of the world, the Tory standards—all these were qualified by the assertion that, "The task of our government would be wherever we could to help those and protect those who are most affected and who

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are no longer able to do anything more to help themselves. That is in the general line of Conservative action and Conservative policy." Surely Heath, firmly grasping *The Right Approach,* had resurrected a kind of Disraelian conservatism. It only took Mrs. Thatcher to mop up with the call for "a crusade not merely to put a temporary brake on socialism but to stop its onward march once and for all." The Labour Party, strangled by the resurging idealism of the interwar years, now confronts an opposition party that believes in a mission.

The Conservatives' confidence that they will soon recapture 10 Downing Street is not simply another example of the much-discussed phenomenon that politics is drifting further to the Right, be it in the United States, Sweden, West Germany or even France. In none of these countries are the major political parties now pitted against one another with such truly ideological fervor as in Britain. Nor are they beset by the daily economic crises forcing the British to their knees.

Callaghan will do his best to avoid a national election, but the compromises he must make with the Conservatives in Parliament will tear asunder whatever fragile peace exists between himself and the Labour Left. During the coming months, Mrs. Thatcher will support Callaghan's beleaguered government only if he persuades his party to accept cuts in national and local government spending, reject import controls, and abandon some of its Socialist legislation. Many, especially overseas, hope that a coalition National Government will emerge soon "to get on with it." But the peculiar thing about the British is that, while they profess to be "getting on with it," these days they rarely do. Whereas a National Government might have been possible only a few years ago, now, when Britain is faced with the worst set of crises since World War II, the two main parties are locked in an ideological struggle that prohibits any thought of open cooperation. It is not inconceivable that Queen Elizabeth II may have to send for a leader to form a crisis government, if only to avoid a general election that would send the pound into a nose dive.

According to the editors of *The Economist,* the root evil of Britain's paralysis is the instability of minority power, which will be eradicated only through constitutional change leading to electoral reform. Early this year I argued in these pages ["Scotland, Wales and Oil: Will Britain Break Up?," January 24] that Britain's ill-conceived progress toward devolving political and economic power to Scotland and Wales also requires a constitutional answer. Such radical reforms delight political scientists, but what else is to be done with the United Kingdom? What is to be done when, moments after Heath sat down in Brighton, he coldly stared down an ecstatic delegate who called upon him to join Mrs. Thatcher in the Shadow Cabinet? What is to be done when the Labour Party fails to accord Sir Harold Wilson a seat amongst the party leadership in Blackpool? Trivial details, but indicative of the political nightmare that is comprehensible and yet so irresolvable. □

POLITICS OR SOAP OPERA?

SEARCH FOR A MAN NAMED CARTER

HARRY S. ASHMORE

Santa Barbara

In March 1975, an itinerant politician named Jimmy Carter turned up at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, largely on his own motion, to present his credentials as President of the United States. I was away at the time, but more than a year later, safely shielded from the blinding smile that seems to have turned off so many of my colleagues, I listened to the taped transcription of the self-appointed candidate's exchange with the skeptical intellectuals assembled around the Center's conference table.

What I heard was a cogent analysis of the need for structural reform in the federal government, and a quite precise delineation of the changes of direction in policy, program and administration Carter believes are necessary to achieve his objectives. The terms he used were to provide his campaign slogan: "I think the government can be just as honest and decent and open and compassionate as can the individual human being; I think the government can be just as competent and efficient and economical and effective as any human being or business entity."

The hour-and-a-half session was open-ended, with the questioners setting the agenda. Carter dealt with the faltering energy program, welfare, tax reform, unemployment, corporate regulation, and the malfunctioning of the Department of Justice. In all these areas he came through as an extraordinarily knowledgeable systems engineer, conditioned by the disciplines imposed at Annapolis and in the course of his service in the Navy's nuclear submarine fleet. At the same time, he managed to demonstrate that he was something more than a humanoid computer by citing the manner in which, as regional planner, legislator and Governor, he had adapted systems theory to the political arts. And at every appropriate

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juncture he reasserted his conviction that efficient management of the bureaucracy does not preclude, but necessarily must include, sensitivity to human needs.

Carter's appearance at the Center was by no means unique. He had by then traversed forty-five states, seeking audiences with presumably influential people in furtherance of his bold, unprecedented strategy of entering all the Democratic primaries. He systematically exposed himself to party leaders, editors and commentators, and politically oriented intellectuals wherever he could arrange a hearing. He was, as he candidly admitted, on a selling trip—employing the only technique available to an outsider who proposed to face the large field of Democratic contenders who even that early were visible on the national stage.

Carter's initial objective was to be taken seriously by these Establishmentarians, and in the great majority of cases he succeeded. At that stage he could not hope for many outright converts, since those who practice politics rarely commit themselves so early to so long a shot. But Carter managed to place himself in the futures book of those who would listen by undercutting in advance the principal charge his opponents would use against him when the primary campaign went public—that he was a naive, parochial upward-striver seeking to exploit public discontent with "Washington." No one who heard Jimmy Carter in one of those no-holds-barred sessions could doubt his intelligence, iron self-discipline, extraordinary energy, and grasp of the main issues in contemporary affairs. There could be, and were, reservations on other grounds, but in these respects at least, it was clear that he was as well qualified to master the intricacies of the Presidential office as any man in public life.

When I first listened to the Center tapes, in late spring of this year, the media stereotype of Carter was taking shape. As he had calculated it would, his victory over George Wallace in Florida had moved him up in the reckoning of the TV assignment desks, for the first time guaranteeing him exposure comparable to that of the "national" candidates who had entered the race from a Congressional base. This was an essential adjunct to the solid, highly professional organizing effort he had mounted in key states, but it also subjected him to television's trivializing effect. The image projected was that of an early American exotic, a soft-voiced, smiling man whose primitive religion led him to talk in public about compassion, brotherhood, and even love (as opposed to sex). The camera crews descended upon Plains and brought forth little Amy, Miss Lillian and Brother Bill as supporting players in a political soap opera that would build to a cliff-hanging climax when the simple Southern boy had to face down the challenge of a late-blooming avant-garde exotic, the existential mystic, Jerry Brown.

A few of the major political commentators pointed out that the sudsy Jimmy Carter now being featured on the nightly news bore little resemblance to the incisive, hard-driving pragmatist they encountered when they talked to the candidate in person. But most were otherwise occupied, trying to explain away the fact that they had foisted upon the public a campaign scenario that was now proving ludicrously wide of the mark. It had begun with treatment of George Wallace as a leader whose following was so formidable that he was bound to emerge from the primaries as a key Democratic power broker—when in fact, as Carter demonstrated in Florida, the Alabaman was a fading anachronism in the political climate that now exists in the South. By extension, the Wallace fallacy supported the theory cherished by what was left of the old-line machine Democrats, and perpetuated by Washington's herd journalists—that the candidates would kill one another off in the primaries, opening the way for a brokered convention in which Edward Kennedy or Hubert Humphrey would be summoned from the wings.

There is little doubt that Carter's predominantly hostile treatment by the Washington pundits results, in part at least, from the fact that these professional prophets find it hard to treat dispassionately with a man who proved them so resoundingly wrong. This distemper has been compounded by the skepticism endemic in Washington, where it is assumed that an ingenuous man cannot possibly succeed in politics. By this test one who emphasizes his commitment not to tell a lie, make a misleading statement, or avoid a controversial issue is automatically judged to be disingenuous, the characterization of Governor Carter around which the Republicans organized President Ford's election campaign.

One of the great ironies of the electoral season is that Carter has suffered his greatest damage at the hands of the media by stubbornly meeting their most extreme demands. His campaign operation surely has been the most open in history, and he has continued to make himself personally available to anyone with press credentials, despite the fact that this kind of running news conference was bound to force him into discussion of the "no-win" issues every experienced campaign manager counsels his candidate to avoid. Carter is particularly vulnerable here, since he is philosophically, if not temperamentally, a moderate who shies away from the uncompromising, doctrinaire position that will at least gain the passionate support of one faction in an emotional controversy. On superheated issues like abortion, amnesty and busing his rational approach outrages those who feel deeply on either side.

It might seem that Carter would be credited with political courage for refusing to be stampeded by the impassioned minority that insists that every fetus has a right to life, or the opposing group that insists with equal moral conviction that every woman has the right to control her own body. Instead, he has been subjected to a kind of rhetorical death watch, mounted by reporters seeking to determine whether he has veered perceptibly in one direction or the other. This gives undue weight to what most Americans regard as a troublesome but peripheral issue, and it brings out religious and ethnic considerations that threaten to fragment the traditional Democratic constituencies Carter managed to reassemble at the party's national convention.

The overblown treatment of "no-win" issues also accentuates the incipient bigotry invoked by Carter's accent and regional heritage. James Reston in *The New*

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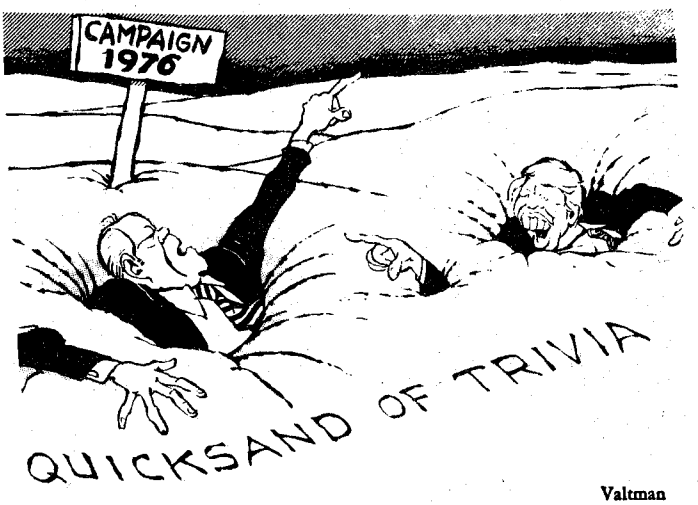
York Times cites the reaction of "Roman Catholics who oppose his moderate view on abortion and busing, Protestants who reject his fundamentalist religion, Jews who remember the anti-Semitic history of some Southern Baptists, and who wonder whether a true Christian believer would ever agree as President to the political sovereignty of Israel over Jerusalem." Except for those with irrevocably closed minds, Carter has been able to reassure most of those who have given him an opportunity to explain how he relates his Baptist faith to the conduct of public affairs, and the range of those who have come away convinced is impressive—from the faculty of Notre Dame to the romantic radical hedonist, Norman Mailer.

Another source of the rising tide of doubt that has pulled down Carter's initial shoo-in lead over President Ford is his refusal to allow his interrogators to push him into setting forth the fine-grain detail of his programmatic proposals. On tax reform, for example, he has refused to go beyond an outline of the directions in which he would move, citing as prime objectives elimination of tax shelters on investment income, and termination of the tax breaks accorded a wide variety of special interests. Once that is done, he contends, it will be possible to adjust tax rates so as to shift the burden upward on the income scale, reducing the proportion now being paid by those in the middle and below.

I know of no economist of any persuasion who would defend the grossly unjust working of the present federal tax structure; even the politicians who are responsible for it justify it only on grounds of expediency; liberal and conservative voices in the media joined in a chorus to condemn the scandalous special interest grab bag logrolled through the current session of Congress; and most political scientists agree that basic tax reform is central to any effective wrestling with the bureaucratic horrors generated by welfare, agricultural price supports, energy, arms procurement, foreign trade and the rest. This would seem to be, as Carter has treated it, an inescapable issue in the 1976 Presidential campaign. Yet, prudent politicians accept the dictum that tax reform too is in the "no-win" category.

The vulnerability comes about because, as Carter insists, it is impossible to present a proposed revenue code in the course of a political campaign; the interactions of the present complex tax structure are such that no single element can be isolated and appraised in terms of what a change would mean to a taxpayer in a given bracket. Yet that is precisely the kind of question the media criticize Carter for refusing to answer—much to the delight of President Ford's handlers, who charge that the Democrat's refusal to go beyond general principles indicates either ignorance or dishonesty, or both.

At this closing stage of the campaign an attempt to separate what Carter has said from what has been said about what he was alleged to have said is akin to the search for the Dead Sea Scrolls. The torrent of words his candidacy has generated since he began to be taken seriously last spring has been largely devoted to the mechanics of the campaign—the means by which the candidates' handlers sought to project the image; the strategy of shaping the appeal to the various interest groups, and their presumed response. Since the visual media report the campaign principally in three-minute time segments, controversy is emphasized to arouse audience interest, and compression eliminates the kind of qualifications necessary to place any serious statement



Valtman

in context. And increasingly the print media follow the lead of the TV managers in determining their own priorities and treatment. The emphasis of mass media coverage is now almost wholly on style and personality, and any effort to give the voters direct access to the substance of the campaign—as in the case of the Presidential debates—is written off as boring.

Beginning with the tape of Carter's discussion at the Center eighteen months ago, I started examining similar first-hand documentation of the candidate's views and attitudes. I find there is a quite voluminous public record available—most of it in magazines, the background sections of newspapers, and low-rated television discussion programs that do not intrude upon the daily quick fix of news and commentary upon which most voters presumably rely. Depending on these sources alone (I have had no part in this campaign, and indeed have not been exposed in person to the charms of either candidate), it is my conclusion that both candidates have done all that reasonably could be expected of them to expose their views on the issues, demonstrate their capacity to handle the duties of the office, and provide a basis on which the voters could make a judgment as to their character and integrity. Ford's record as Congressman, Vice President and unelected President is available to demonstrate how he could be expected to perform if he were given a full term in the White House. Governor Carter's sharply contrasting approach was spelled out at the very beginning of the campaign, and has been elaborated in position papers, speeches and extended discussion with anyone who could advance a reasonable claim to his time.

In tracing out this record I find no instance in which Carter has departed from the principles he originally enunciated, or has significantly modified his position on the programs he has outlined. The trivial nature of the

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"evidence" of evasiveness that has occupied so much media attention can be seen in the controversy over whether a single reporter once heard him say he thought he could effect economies that would reduce defense expenditures by $15 billion rather than the $7 billion he usually projects—a matter of no arithmetic significance in a budget of such magnitude, and certainly no basis for suggesting that a man of his military background is bent on recklessly reducing the nation's defenses. Yet it is this kind of hyperactive adversary journalism that provides the ammunition President Ford has used, in an echo of Spiro Agnew's alliterative assault upon George McGovern, to charge that his opponent "wanders, he wavers, he waffles, and he wiggles."

In the post-convention period Carter has found himself running against two media stereotypes—his own, and that of Gerald Ford. The President's media image is hardly flattering, but it is politically useful: a man who is conceded to be honest and well-intentioned can be forgiven if he also is portrayed as stupid and inept, and despite all the vast advantages of incumbency, this image has conferred upon Ford the underdog role, invoking sympathy when he is attacked, or even questioned. On the other hand, when Carter displays the innate toughmindedness and sophistication which contrasts so sharply with the media image of a moralizing provincial, he arouses the suspicion that he is a political Jekyll and Hyde.

It does not follow that those who have had a chance to see Carter in context, without the distorting lens of media coverage, would necessarily vote for him. He is not satisfactory to those on the Left who believe that the materialist American society is hopelessly corrupt and will respond only to radical restructuring. He is a moderate reformist who makes no promise of ideological innovation, but argues that we can follow the welfare route to attain a tolerable degree of social justice within the limits of representative democracy and marketplace economics. But he is, as I noted at the outset, a systems engineer by temperament and training, and there is no doubt that he would make a massive attempt to reorganize the flabby, inefficient federal bureaucracy. In that sense, then, he is not satisfactory to those on either the Left or Right who believe we must dismantle the central structures of government and transfer autonomy to institutions closer to the people.

In that Center meeting Carter began by saying, "I think a competent government is crucial, no matter what we hope to achieve," and went on to define the role he seeks: "Nobody can lead a nation except the President; nobody can evolve a clear policy, nobody can inspire the country to reach for certain goals, nobody can delineate a comprehensive approach . . . except the President; nobody can set a moral tone for the whole government, even the nation to some degree, except the President." Whatever else he might be, this man was no sanctimonious innocent wandering the hinterland as the prophet of a formless, neo-Populist protest against big government.

Carter has shown no disposition to agonize over the possible missteps that produced so many adverse headlines. "Almost everything I do, I do intentionally," he told reporters late in the campaign. "You may not believe it, but it is true." It is, in fact, this kind of certitude that gives pause to some of those who have seen Governor Carter up close—the total absence of any sense of self-depreciation, to soften the impression of driving ambition that produces occasional flashes of arrogance. The suspicion follows that this aspect of his character gives the lie to his purported ingenuousness. The offset is that Carter readily acknowledges the justice of these reservations; the primary weakness identified in himself by this profoundly introspective man is pride; the sin for which he has spent more time on his knees than any other is lack of humility. It was, in fact, the candid discussion of this aspect of his self-image, and of its relationship to his religious faith, that led to perhaps the most damaging statement of all—that ripped out of the context of the interview he gave *Playboy*.

The distinguished religious historian, William Lee Miller, wrote that "the irony arises that as informed an exposition on Christianity as you could find from any American politician got turned around into something offensive (perhaps) exactly to the people who should have been most deeply impressed by it." Carter was not talking about his sex life, but responding to his interrogators' suggestion that his religious views might make him a rigid, unbending President. His point was that there was nothing in his religious tradition to make him coercively puritanical, self-righteous or censorious. "On the contrary," Professor Miller wrote in *The New Republic*, "those beliefs teach the opposite lesson; humility, forgiveness, judge not that ye be not judged. Carter gave an extemporaneous version of the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the right one to choose." It made no difference; weeks after the full *Playboy* text was available, an editorial writer for the *Los Angeles Times* was still pointing to Carter's "blunder in discussing his sexual fantasies with *Playboy* magazine."

The demands of the media now wholly dominate the political process. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to make a compelling case that four years ago the canny and ruthless image merchants retained by Richard Nixon, recognizing that fact, used the great leverage of the White House to manipulate the channels of communication to the advantage of their candidate. There is no such consideration this time around. No one could seriously argue that Carter's Atlanta-based public relations experts contrived the stereotype that emerged from the day-to-day coverage of his campaign. And certainly there is no suggestion that the discrepancy between the Carter of the evening news and the Carter of the extended record results from the partisan bias of a presumed Eastern seaboard intellectual establishment. The even more alarming truth seems to be that the trivializing and distorting effect of campaign coverage in the television age is now built into the mass communications system, and is not the product of conscious design but of journalistic default. Carter, who has displayed remarkable prescience as a political tactician, recognized the hazard at the outset, but

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had no option but to accept the rules of the game since there are no conceivable means by which an outsider seeking recognition could challenge them.

"You have to recognize a truism and that is that the accentuation of the character of a campaign by the news media always exaggerates conflict and combat and critical remarks," Carter has said. "I can make ten speeches today on inflation or unemployment or housing and if I made a thirty-second statement about my opponent it would be in the headlines, would be the national television story tonight. There is no way to change it and it exaggerates greatly in the public's mind the degree of actual conflict between the candidates."

As the general election approaches the media are systematically blaming the candidates for what is almost universally branded as the low quality of the Presidential campaign. The implication here, guaranteed to produce widespread public apathy as it is amplified and sanctified by the herd journalists, is that the two-party system no longer produces contenders worthy of public support. But even if one holds this to be true of Jimmy Carter—as I obviously do not—what does it say about all those eliminated along the way? It is pertinent to recall that Walter Mondale, Terry Sanford, Morris Udall, Henry Jackson, Sargent Shriver, Birch Bayh, Milton Shapp, Frank Church and the rest of the company that formally or informally tried out for the Democratic nomination found that there was no way they could meet the media's demands and still reach the national constituency with a serious, coherent case for their candidacies. If I am right that a considerable majority of those who vote for or against Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, or elect not to vote, may do so for the wrong reasons, it seems to me the responsibility can hardly be located in Plains, Ga. □

THE BROADCASTERS ARE SMILING

OBTUSE POLITICS AND THE FCC

NICHOLAS JOHNSON

It seemed for a time, after Watergate, that federal officeholders were looking under every rug in their energetic efforts to associate themselves with clean government. As a constructive part of that spirit the Senate Commerce Committee caused to be published the Kramer-Graham report on appointments to the FCC and other regulatory commissions. The report accurately observed that, "With noteworthy exceptions, the appointive process as it now exists has consistently failed to provide the federal regulatory agencies with able, energetic and forceful leadership dedicated to the public interest." The clear suggestion was that henceforth the committee should not, and would not, put up with this newly discovered abuse of public trust. It may come as a shock, but the report seems to have had little influence upon the Senate's most recent participation in "the appointive process as it now exists."

On September 8, the Commerce Committee approved the nomination of Margita White to the Federal Communications Commission. (Joseph Fogarty, former committee counsel, was approved for the FCC the same day.) It was as good an example as can be found of the process of Presidential appointments to regulatory commissions which the committee's report had deplored. In the battle over the nomination of Mrs. White are all the elements of crass political dealing, moralistic posturing, and noncomprehension of the issues that produce regulatory commissions which serve only themselves and the regulated industries. Broadcasters seem to be smiling, and the Senate has made clear that, despite the rhetoric of the past three years, it is not willing to change the rules of the political game.

As soon as Margita White's nomination was announced, in early July, controversy began to brew over her suitability. There were many problems, including the manner of her selection and her lack of any real qualifications. (Some accounts indicated that President Ford was trying to get Mrs. White out of the White House Office of Communications—she had been hired for President Nixon's Herb Klein operation—to make room for some high-powered PR men for his campaign.) Even more devastating than her background, questionable qualifications and Ford's motives, however, was the very serious conflict of interest posed by her sitting on the FCC. It became clear that Mrs. White could not serve as a commissioner without appearing to have a financial stake in the proceedings.

The issue arises because Mrs. White's husband, Stuart White, is a partner in the Washington law firm of Hamel, Park, McCabe, and Saunders. The firm's clients include a growing number who appear before the FCC. Their fees currently represent 10 per cent of the firm's income, and the potential for growth is enormous. Three of the firm's communications lawyers are as well connected as any in Washington: the president of the Federal Communications Bar Association, a former assistant to former FCC Chairman Dean Burch, and a former general counsel to the FCC. The firm advertises itself in Martindale and Hubbell, the yellow pages of the legal profession, as specializing in communications law. And now a partner's wife sits on the FCC.

The law of conflict of interest is, with good reason, tough. Courts have long recognized that the efficacy of

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a system of justice rests on the public acceptability of the decisions. And that, in turn, requires that there shall be not the slightest whisper of self-interest on the part of the decision maker. For example, subsequent to Mrs. White's hearings, Judge Sirica disqualified himself in a case because of a possible appearance of conflict. It was not his interest that was involved, nor that of his parents, his wife, or any of his children. The problem was that his brother-in-law sat on the board of one of the banks that had lent money to one of the parties in the case. Sirica did not want to risk this (seemingly remote) appearance of possible conflict. If the law applies in this way to Judge Sirica—and it was Judge Sirica's law that was applied to President Nixon—the same spirit should guide those considering the case of Margita White.

All parties recognize her conflict. The White House, the Justice Department, the General Accounting Office and the FCC offered legal opinions to the Senate. Mrs. White ultimately agreed to recuse herself from any case in which Hamel, Park was participating. She will take steps, as yet unspecified, to insure that she is insulated from information about FCC action in Hamel, Park cases. Her husband agrees to forgo any of the firm's profits from its communications work, as long as his wife sits on the commission. Again, the details are not clear. Mrs. White's inadequate proposals were not dictated merely by public pressure. The case law and statutes governing conflict of interest required some action. The Justice Department letter to the Senate makes clear that Mr. White's decision was also necessary.

There are a number of very serious problems with the arrangements suggested for the Whites. For one thing, there are no specifics as to how any of them are to be carried out. It is hard to imagine how a commissioner can be kept insulated from an unknown number of cases. Nor did the committee have any way of assuring that Mr. White's end of the bargain would be honored. Aside from a letter from the managing partner of Hamel, Park stating that such an arrangement would be established, no further method of monitoring was suggested. Without seeing the books of Hamel, Park there is no way to know whether Mr. White is being compensated directly or indirectly from the communications business. In any event, it is impossible for Mr. White to continue as a partner of the firm, as he intends to do, without participating to some degree in decisions affecting the growth and direction of the firm's communications practice. And there is no way to be sure that the Whites will not receive some form of compensation from the firm's expanded communications work in the future. Finally, as Sen. John Pastore himself pointed out at the hearings, the Congress would have absolutely no recourse if Mr. White did violate the arrangement—even if it could find out about it.

Mrs. White's nonparticipation in FCC cases also causes severe problems. The FCC has enough problems trying to be an effective regulator without having one member who is at the mercy of the regulated industries. And that's exactly what Mrs. White will be. If her position in a case were known, or predictable, it would be a simple matter for the adversely affected party to hire Hamel, Park and thereby eliminate her vote.

Many instances of conflict will still exist. As anyone familiar with commission business can tell you, there are times when a company has a strong interest in a case in which it does not participate. For example, the positions of AT&T—another of Hamel, Park's clients—are often represented before the FCC by state public utility commissions. The firm may have a real financial interest in cases involving clients for whom they do a lot of work, although some other firm is representing the client, or another party entirely, in that particular matter.

Harvey Shulman, an able lawyer for the Media Access Project in Washington, did a thorough job of laying out at the hearings the almost infinite potential instances of conflict. What of a client, for which Hamel, Park is general counsel, which uses another firm in a minor matter? Does Mrs. White participate or not? What of a client that uses Hamel, Park to take its cases before the FCC's Administrative Trial Judge and Review Board, but drops the firm's name from the briefs when it appears before the full commission? What if a client is never "represented" by Hamel, Park at the FCC, although it gets virtually all its legal counsel from the firm? How is Mrs. White to discover this fact when the company is before the commission? Will it make any difference to her? What of cases in this election year that involve equal time, or fairness complaints, affecting her former employer, President Ford? Does she abstain from those cases as well? Shulman's examples go on and on. The point is that Mrs. White must either disqualify herself from so many cases as to render herself totally ineffective as a commissioner, or be involved in cases in which she has an apparent, and potentially a real, conflict of interest.

Perhaps the saddest part of this case was the way in which it was manufactured into a women's issue by those who understood it least. There was an attempt to argue in some quarters, including the editorial page of *The Washington Post*, that it was sexist to apply conflict of interest laws to Mrs. White, and that to do so impedes women from pursuing their careers. I want more women on the FCC, but such arguments do not hold water in this case.

Mrs. White has had no career as a government administrator, lawyer, economist, or consumer advocate that could be "impeded" by a refusal to seat her on the FCC. Her career has been in public relations, and she's perfectly free to pursue it in government or business. Moreover, as Senator Pastore mentioned at the hearings, Mrs. White could have been appointed to any other regulatory commission or executive agency without any problem, and he urged President Ford to do so. Ford refused. She certainly would have been as qualified for any of them as she is for the FCC. Unfortunately, the National Organization for Women (NOW), ordinarily a leader in the fight for media reform, backed down from opposition to this nomination. The absence of NOW participation weighed heavily on the committee.

Then, when Harvey Shulman, and others, tried to respond to *The Washington Post* editorial, the paper curiously refused to print any of their letters. Given its very lucrative broadcast properties, which account for a large proportion of the *Post*'s yearly profit, one would have

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thought the paper would be particularly sensitive to fairness on the issue. Senator Pastore used the unanswered editorial in explaining his ultimate vote for Mrs. White.

Thus, less than six months after publishing its promising report on the appointive process, the Senate Committee accepted a nominee whose principal qualifications seem to be that she had served her President and party well. She was selected without any search for the most qualified woman, and brings to the FCC an enormous, unresolved problem of conflict of interest that the subcommittee thoroughly documented and recognized.

We have, indeed, put Watergate behind us. □

ON A WASTING PLANET

The National Imperative to Plan

OTIS L. GRAHAM Jr.

It passed almost without notice in this Presidential year that all of the Democratic candidates, including Governor Carter, favored national planning. When the field was at its largest, every Democratic candidate for the nomination except George Wallace endorsed the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, a fast-moving measure that promises full employment through planning.

Are we to conclude that one of the two major parties has converted to planning? With several qualifications, the answer appears to be yes. But the question is wrongly phrased. The Democrats have not converted—they have returned to the planning idea after an absence of four decades. It was during the economic and political crisis of 1933 that the planning idea made its first appearance as an organizing strategy for social management. Franklin Roosevelt was a planner by instinct and conviction. He and his Brain Trust formulated the basic planning assumptions in the early years of a crippling depression: that modern industrial society required public intervention to attain stable growth, that such intervention must touch all fundamental social developments, that it must be goal-oriented, effectively coordinated at the center, and anticipatory rather than reactive. The New Dealers never worked out satisfactory forms to embody these ideas, and Congress resisted every advance in that direction. By the end of the 1930s Roosevelt had been forced to give up on national planning, and to accept the uncoordinated system of short-range interventions prompted by interest groups that has lasted to this day.

Yet Roosevelt's planning experiments led to valuable insights. A society which planned would be characterized by two main features at the governmental level that FDR did not find when he came to Washington. First, policy contact with all the major sources of social change; second, a set of planning capacities at the center of government, meshed into a planning process.

As to the first, it is well known that the New Deal expanded the government's influence over the economy. In traditional areas of government activity, such as transportation, communication, energy and natural resources, FDR tried to synthesize existing policies into a national policy. And for the first time (except perhaps briefly during World War I) the government developed what is today called an Incomes Policy by involving itself in wage and price decisions on a broad front. Through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (which had in fact been instituted by President Hoover), and to a lesser extent through its housing and agricultural credit programs, the New Deal exercised strong influence over private investment. These policy tools, along with the traditional fiscal, monetary and regulatory instruments, did not in themselves add up to planning. They were not intended to do so by the Congressmen who voted for them piecemeal. But they supplied virtually the full armory of economic policies required to manage a modern economy.

And it soon became obvious that more was involved than narrowly economic questions. Before the 1930s were over, the New Deal had made important attempts to extend social policy to matters of population distribution, land use and science and technology. The first two, especially, were new areas for national policy, and the third was an area which before the 1930s had been touched on only marginally, and mostly in the areas of agriculture and food and drugs. Planned social development seemed to require that *all* strategic points of contact between policy and society be invested by public power, and it appeared that the strategy extended beyond economic matters to what we now call national growth or settlement policy.

Thus Roosevelt and his generation seem at least to have located the principal strategic points of contact. Only population size did not appear to them to be an important agenda item among those that we would list today. In the 1930s, the experts thought that the population was about to stabilize or perhaps even to decline.

I stress that all of the above was aspiration, not achievement. Coherent policy was impossible, for Congress preferred fragmentation. Roosevelt got next to nowhere in his struggle to develop explicit land-use and population-distribution policies at the national level. The New Deal was forced to accept random and uncoordinated expansions of familiar regulatory and fiscal powers, settling everywhere for policies, never policy. Even that looked revolutionary at the time, but the novelty was mostly in pace, scale and style, not in structure. In the

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post-New Deal political economy, private forces were strong and public forces weak. Liberals, pleased with what had been won, were for thirty years unaware that the strategic points were either not under national influence at all, or were touched by a centipede of conflicting policies devised in compartments dominated by private interests.

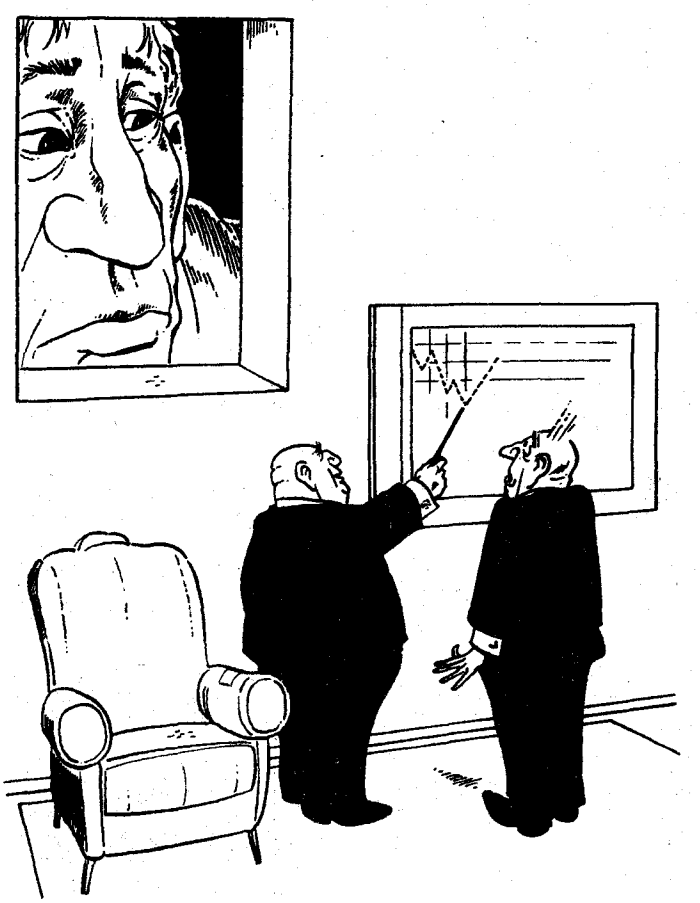
I spoke of a second prerequisite for planning: a set of planning capacities institutionalized and meshed as a process at the center of government. When Roosevelt came to Washington in 1933 the Presidency amounted to little more than his personal staff: secretaries, cooks, a doctor, two aides—but no economists, lawyers, scientists, statisticians, not even speechwriters. He tried to remedy the executive's weaknesses (let Congress look after its own!) by strengthening economic and social data-gathering and analysis, thus to facilitate forecasting, technology assessment, policy coordination and review, and to reform the irrational organization of the executive branch. All of these capacities but the last Roosevelt tried to achieve through one institution, that interesting and ill-fated agency, the National Resources Planning Board (1933-43, under varying names). The board spent up to $1 million a year in its heyday on studies of future trends, the analysis of social as well as economic data, and on setting up state planning agencies. It also made a futile attempt to do what the Cabinet clearly could not do—coordinate administration policy in areas where they were exceptionally fragmented—public works, water, land use, urban aid, housing, etc. "Coordination" being a hated word in Washington then as now, the NRPB developed many enemies, foremost among them the Army Corps of Engineers. Roosevelt nursed the agency along until 1943, when Congress abolished it.

Much was learned in all of this. While FDR tried to make one planning board provide him with vital services which we now see as requiring a cluster of planning institutions, he was reaching out for another prerequisite for a government that planned. That was reorganization of the executive branch. In 1937 he proposed to bring all executive branch units, including even the regulatory agencies, under twelve departments. We know that this plan was defeated without reference to history, for Governor Carter has us talking again about the necessity for reorganization. In 1939 FDR was given six assistants within a new Executive Office of the President, but that was not the functional rationalization he had wanted.

Defeated in the 1930s, the planning idea had one last hurrah at the end of the war, when the Full Employment bill brought forward by Congressional liberals stimulated a discussion of planning. But when it passed in 1946 as the Employment Act, the bill had been altered to eliminate its planning features and its guarantee of full employment. From then until the late 1960s, liberals forgot about planning, and worked with a system associated with the late New Deal—Keynesian manipulation of fiscal levers, *ad hoc* intervention at myriad points of the economy, fragmentation of effort, weak central direction. Growth lubricated the wheels of the post-New Deal political economy.

But not for long. By the late 1960s, warning signs were everywhere. As resource limits narrowed and the world became more tightly interdependent, it became clear that the government's activities were too self-contradictory, its organization too fragmentary, its vision too short-term for rational social management. Without seeing any convergence on planning in what they did, liberals in government began to return to the search for the capacities and strategic points of contact that FDR had explored. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman's concern in 1967 for rural-urban balance in growth patterns stimulated a movement for national growth policy which by 1970 had moved Congress to require of the President a biennial report on national growth.

Since then the pressure for a national growth policy has continued to mount. In 1967 Senator Mondale sponsored a drive for social accounting. Senator Kennedy and others led a successful campaign to provide Congress with technology assessment, Senators Muskie and Jackson spearheaded the drive for environmental controls which resulted in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Jackson and Representative Udall sponsored national land-use legislation. The important reform of Congressional budgeting procedures came in 1974 with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act. In recent months, Democrats in the House Committee on Public Works have argued for a national public works investment policy, and both the Science and Technology and the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committees have



Vadillo, El Sol de Mexico

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drafted legislation to provide long-range forecasting abilities for both branches.

Roosevelt would have seen the pattern in all of this. Taken item by item, none of it was planning; taken together, it was a resumption of the planning impulse of the 1930s. A single legislative framework was not long in arriving. Senator Humphrey drafted a bill in 1973 to establish a national growth policy process, soon realized that he was dealing with something slightly larger than population distribution, and in 1975, casting verbal caution aside, submitted the Humphrey-Javits Balanced Growth and Economic Planning bill. Congressman Bolling and others have planning bills pending in the House. Not since 1935 had legislation carrying the planning label been before the national legislature.

Economist Herbert Stein has recently assured conservatives that the current surge of interest in planning is nothing more than a familiar cycle. Liberals, he argued in *The Wall Street Journal*, become feverish with planning schemes once every sixteen years or so. It happened in the 1930s, briefly again under John Kennedy, and now in the 1970s. This current fever, like the others, will pass.

Stein's search for historical orientation is commendable, but he is very likely wrong. The interest in planning was not as widespread nor broadly based in the 1930s as it is today. A mere handful of Congressional people were sympathetic, and the academic and business communities were either unfamiliar with the idea or hostile to it. The distinction between "command" planning on the Soviet model and what the French in the postwar era were to call "indicative" planning in a capitalist setting was not understood. With minor exceptions, liberals in the 1930s were uncertain that national planning should be the New Deal's guiding strategy, particularly after the failure of the National Recovery Administration (NRA), a modified form of command planning tried between 1933 and 1935. And liberals were discovering another way to manage national affairs, fastening Keynesian fiscal policy as an engine behind the Broker State. Stein's first cycle of planning was a weak one, with none of the preconditions for permanence.

There was no cycle of planning in the early 1960s, only John Kennedy's passing interest in French indicative planning. He sent Walter Heller to Europe to study this new form of planning that did not order any private citizen to do anything. Indicative planning depended for its influence upon "the announcement effect" of national production and income targets, and the economic rationalization produced by endless rounds of planning discussion. Kennedy made no use of whatever he learned about French planning.

Today interest in the planning movement is sustained by a fundamental loss of confidence in the current political economy, American as well as global. Planning could be shelved in the 1930s because our vast margin of usable resources generated a conflict-calming affluence when Keynesian macroeconomic theories were applied with even modest competence by those in Washington. The resource margins are narrowing now at breakneck speed. Independence has yielded to global interdependence in ways that are daily brought home to all of us. The idea that there are limits to growth, while very new, is so astonishingly hackneyed by now that we easily underestimate its revolutionary implications. With the inescapable necessity to manage resources carefully, to take account of interdependence in a sensitive planetary environment, humanity is offered no alternative to a system in which public policy touches all strategic points of social development, is effectively coordinated at the center, and is anticipatory rather than reactive. There is no word for this system but planning, and while its fateful arrival may be resisted, it can be only briefly postponed.

In one short paragraph I have asserted large conclusions without arguing them at decent length, or taking account of the many interesting objections that always occur to the American mind. Stein's comparison of the ephemeral planning episode of the 1930s with that of today is, however, an analogy undercut by two bits of evidence worth mention. If circumstances are fundamentally changed and the current political economy literally cannot limp on much longer without structural reform, some capitalists will know it—in fact an ever increasing number—and business opinion will become unsettled and begin to shift.

That is happening. It is not just the Left that now talks of planning. America's largest corporations have, of course, been planning for years, in most cases since the late 1950s or early 1960s. (Few of them were planning in FDR's day, and thus lacked a certain facilitating familiarity with the language and concepts of modern systemic management.) That corporations now plan does not make all or even most of today's business and financial leadership quite ready for national governmental planning. Most still make a distinction between the two, everything depending upon where the planning occurs. Yet many business leaders have changed their minds, and planning *in the indicative manner* now seems to them greatly preferable to the stop-go economic policies and short-sighted materials and energy policies of the past. Among others, one notes the planning sympathies of Thornton Bradshaw of ARCO, John R. Bunting of First Pennsylvania Bank, W. Michael Blumenthal of the Bendix Corporation, William May of the American Can Company, Robert McNamara of the World Bank. This shift in business opinion parallels a growing conviction among academics, officials of organized labor and government personnel that the existing political economy requires substantial structural reform.

Given the breadth of the contemporary dissatisfaction with existing governmental arrangements, it should not have been surprising to find the Nixon administration actively involved in a search for planning capacities. Of course, they did not call it that. But what else are we to call the following: establishment of the Domestic Council and National Goals Research Staff, endorsement of a national growth policy and national land-use planning, proposal of a radical reorganization of the executive branch, adoption of an incomes policy through wage and price controls, appointment of a population commission and a materials policy commission, and a general cen-

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tralization of policy making in the White House? In all of this Mr. Nixon was resuming the lines of advance toward planning explored by the New Dealers.

The administration recoiled sharply from many of these initiatives in 1971-72. Only the centralization of power in the Presidency remained of the planning thrust, and taken by itself it led toward Watergate. But for a brief period Nixon reminded us that planning is a neutral instrument, available to the Right or the Left. And he offered us an example of what conservative planning might look like.

It would resemble liberal planning in establishing coherent national policy at all strategic points of contact with social development, and in placing effective control of policy at the center. It would apparently differ from liberal planning in several crucial respects. Conservatives have an instinct for market guidance, liberals for regulation—although both these biases have become weaker over the years. Conservatives accept nationalization reluctantly and to rescue profits; liberals move in this direction with fewer qualms and to rescue services. Conservatives will usually tilt toward producers, liberals toward consumers. When forced to an incomes policy, conservatives clamp harder on wages, liberals have at least a stated preference for an equally firm lid on prices.

These policy leanings are familiar to us from observing various administrations conduct policy without plan, and will be continued under any form of planning. One other distinction ought to be noted. Conservative planning is built around a strong Presidency, our Right-of-Center party finally having learned what European conservatives have always known. The liberals, too, thought only of augmenting Presidential power for an embarrassingly long season, without regard for other participants in the decision-making process. Some shift of liberal focus is now apparent. Liberal leadership in both houses is now actively constructing pieces of the planning capacity for the Congress as well as the executive branch.

So there is an interesting range of alternatives for those who will design planning in contemporary capitalist America. One can now see that the planning which emerges will be centrist, enacted by moderates from both parties. American Socialists are well aware of this, and deeply ambivalent about the mounting evidence of a shift to a planning system. They know that planning could arrive from the conservative side, from a Rockefeller or Connally-type Republican. This alternative, briefly glimpsed in the early Nixon years, has for the moment receded. The GOP has shifted back toward the old formulas, and will probably remain there until its old men die off. As for the Democrats, if they win with Carter, will they move forthwith toward planning, and how?

Mr. Carter's views in the matter are not fully known, perhaps not even to himself. But just as one could gain some sense of Roosevelt's probable social strategies even during his evasive 1932 campaign, so Carter has given some indication of his attitude toward planning. After some initial hesitation, he has endorsed Humphrey-Hawkins. In a May interview with *Business Week*, Carter spoke favorably of indicative planning:

> I believe in long-range planning so that government, business, labor and other entities in our society can work together if they agree with the goals established. But at least it would be predictable. I don't favor the federal government making plans for the private sector mandatory.

That is by now a mainstream statement among liberals, and exhibits a certain caution that is characteristic of Carter. His strong interest in reorganization hints at that desire for accountability and control, the lack of which has made several recent Presidents dissatisfied with the Broker State's fragmented little baronies. And it cannot be without significance that, in his acceptance speech in

(Continued on page 477)

APARTHEID IN '72

AFRIKANER DIXIELAND

CHARLES MORGAN Jr.

In the fall of 1972 we checked into the Holiday Inn near the airport at Johannesburg. The giant black bellman ran to our room, our 80 pounds of luggage in his arms. My wife and I followed, embarrassed and walking so rapidly we barely noticed the hotel lounge—off it, the Alabama Room, nightly entertainment provided by The Alabama Trio. There was no television. The government, fearing its effects, forbade it. We flipped on the radio (all stations belong to the government). Kate Smith was singing *Don't Fence Me In.* That was followed by *A Tisket a Tasket.* We had stepped back into the pre-1954 "separate but equal" Alabama of our childhood.

In East London, South Africa, a city on the Indian Ocean between Durban and Capetown, the editor of the *Daily Dispatch,* Donald J. Woods, welcomed us into his home. My first speech was to the Afrikaner and English daily newspaper publishers at a dinner in honor of his anti-apartheid newspaper's 100th anniversary. I spoke of the courage of those who reported our civil rights revolution. And, of course, I told them how well integration works.

After that I traveled the country, lecturing on the Bill of Rights and the American constitutional system. At the University of Durban-Westville (for Indians), law Dean Leonard Gering refused to knuckle under to pressure to withdraw my invitation to speak. At tea the Rector

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(President), S. P. Olivier, looked over his cup at me and said in that Afrikaner accent so easily mistaken for German: "I was in your country when the black students demonstrated. SNCC was their name I believe. We have no such student violence here."

Approximately 45 miles west of East London in the town of Alice, are the University of Fort Hare (for blacks only) and the Federal Seminary (for blacks only). Alice is a fraction of the size of Plains, Ga. The two-story frame hotel where we stayed overlooks its only other building, a one-story service station. The university is government-owned and I was barred from speaking there (as in Capetown at the University of the Western Cape "for coloreds"). The Seminary, supported by a federation of churches, was the nation's last privately owned institution of higher education for blacks.

I told them of the life and times of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Elsewhere black students told me how recordings of his speeches were smuggled into the country inside Frank Sinatra albums.) That day a white American missionary was celebrating the fortieth anniversary of her arrival in South Africa. She made me proud by saying that my remarks had made her proud to be an American.

Soweto, the forced "location" for a million black people on the outskirts of Johannesburg, stretches for miles. All along the near horizon are the high hills of gold mine waste. We entered rapidly growing Dimbaza, its huts hidden from the highway by equally rapidly growing eucalyptus trees. Three dollars per person per month was provided urban blacks no longer able to labor for their masters and madams. We went into one camp after another, even though tourists without passes are forbidden. Tens of thousands of blacks live in rows down beautiful valleys where a few easily positioned tanks might kill a rebellion.

Brave, black-sashed white women stand silently outside "pass courts" in protest. Inside, wire-caged black people face removal and banishment to far away tribal territories which many of them have never seen. Their crime? A white person failed to make the required every-three-day entry in their passbook. Less forgetful whites, trapped within history's racial and economic conspiracy, search for a way out. We had heard these conversations before, and had answers from our Southern experience. But we had a Supreme Court, black voters, a neutral federal government, habeas corpus and, most of all, Martin King.

Now blacks move and South Africa moves toward inevitable confrontation. The United States allies itself with the worst of the white folks. President Ford expresses his regrets at our inability to attend the war in Angola. But we were there (and everywhere else in Africa), under cover, against the poor. The President's Republican opponent even pondered aloud assistance to the worst of the white minority that rules Rhodesia.

They believe our vital national interests are ore and oil and the shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean. Flowing from the Persian Gulf is the oil-based wealth of sheiks and shahs and their corporate princes—Hughes, Hunt,

Uluschak, Edmonton Journal (Canada)

"Now, Then—What Seems To Be the Problem?"

Ludwig, Niarchos, Onassis and, of course, the Rockefellers. It is for them that our government works in Africa. As our leaders embrace Brezhnev and help kill Allende, we learn that they are more comfortable with despots and dictators than they are with democrats.

I told white liberals and black leaders to depend upon themselves, but they really do seek American capital investments. They wanted our showmen and athletes—but not our businessmen—to boycott their land. I told them they were wrong. The profit margin in those low-wage plants is high enough to activate every corporate law firm from Washington to Wall Street. Even lawyers who take *pro bono* (dimes-to-beggars) cases work for our "vital national interests." It is their *pro malo* clients who find it profitable to keep democracy down.

Friends tell me of the good influence of American industry, but I lived in Birmingham where industry was run from Pittsburgh and New York and consciences were steel hard. Their champion was a police commissioner named Bull and they always struggled to preserve the harsh old order against new law.

Perhaps white American businessmen and the blacks whom they employ have brought some progress to South Africa. I hope so. But my visit to South Africa was in the fall of 1972. Today no one speaks at the black universities. They are shut down. Black and white students who befriended us and who believe in democracy and the United States are under house arrest. Some have been "banned." The law dean who invited me to speak to his Indian students has been fired.

Recently toughs shot into the house in East London where we stayed. Its owner, the editor who imported me to South Africa to speak for freedom, faces six months in prison for his refusal to reveal a source of information to the secret police of the Bureau of State Security (pronounced BOSS). □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Specific Instances of Pain

DOMESTIC PARTICULARS. *By Frederick Busch. New Directions. 208 pp. $11.95. Paper $3.95.*

RICHARD ELMAN

Much of this novel is set in the same section of Brooklyn where I grew up, and at about the same time, the 1950s when this pleasant, not particularly congested area of comfortable private and semi-detached houses, two-family flats, and small apartment buildings, bounded by subway lines, seemed to be the sort of place where nearly all the inhabitants had mortgaged whatever frail hopes they still had for themselves so that their children would be able to do better some day. Yoked to the chore of parenthood (or the obligations of childhood, under such circumstances) we all grew even more sullen, or sadder as we came to fulfill ourselves somewhat, went out into the world, and saw our parents' "selflessness" as, at best, a debacle, or through the perspective of anger.

The squalors of that life and that world, then, were chiefly psychological: the squalors of lovelessness, loneliness, the deprivation of lives winding down to a grudge, to listlessness and boredom, to loss. In some ways they could not yet account for except, perhaps, with a look of anguish, our parents had privatized themselves out of existence; they had done their jobs only too well: we hated them for the lives they had led and did not wish to associate with so much senseless pain and envy any more.

Domestic Particulars is a story of unspectacular martyrdoms, senseless sacrifices, of the endurance of long subway rides that end up nowhere except in front of dimly lighted houses behind shrubbery, of the cold of the marriage bed, and the stoicisms of a depression-minded generation, the specific betrayals of energy and excitement that result from the squandering of lives for caution's sake.

Specifically, it is a painful account of one such small family dwelling in the Midwood section of Brooklyn (and later Manhattan): of Mac, a sell-out college professor, and Claire, his intellectually frustrated wife, both former progressives turned cautious by McCarthyism, and their prodigal, Harry. As told through their alternating monologues and consciousnesses, it seems to me not only accurate and real but extremely moving, without being sentimentalized, full of the anguish and terror of everyday family confrontation, the intimacies of sour smells and suppressed rage, of a tenderness that is never used to cover over waste, destructiveness, lunacy and failure.

The novel ranges from Claire's early memories of her own childhood of poverty, pain and humiliation through the grudge of her marriage to Mac and the long ordeal of child rearing, and of eventual dissolution and death; it moves on to Harry's eventual rebellions, his sense of alienation, his aloneness in the final chapter when he can learn nothing more about himself or his childhood from an old family acquaintance about to die herself, and recognizes that he must no longer try to remember that part of his life if he is to live without feeling constantly debilitated.

It's a touching account but also a maddening book: to think by what unholy and horrible sense of caution such people constrained themselves, the shame, the waste. In this novel a father burns the family library during a birthday party for his son (so he can feel secure in his job at Brooklyn College); and his wife feels envy that the little boy has friends who know him, in some ways, better than she does. Mac and Claire attend their son's graduation from college upstate and feel unwanted and rejected. Thrown back on themselves in this strange place, they experience one of their few moments of genuine intimacy, but then Mac goes off to interrupt his son at a farewell party for his friends.

The truths this book touches on are nearly all specific instances of pain: Claire inquiring after Harry from his ex-girl friends, or placing ads for her son's whereabouts in the *New York Review*; Mac wandering senselessly around Morningside Heights as a cardiac case after retiring from Columbia; Mac and Claire in a cold Morningside Heights apartment, neighbored to crazies, degenerates and callous students, in the middle of the winter of the "energy crisis."

Busch is always specific, and informative, his prose echoes their thoughts and their moods, the specific clothing, and furniture of all three lives is invoked over and over again in changing settings.

The kinds of people who stay married when they probably never should have gotten married to begin with bestow a legacy of grimness on their only heir. It is Harry's destiny to be awkward and unhappy. He experiences all sorts of doubts about himself. He is a brooder, melancholic. Busch shows us Harry's physical exam for army inductions, his strange pained letters home, his affair with a divorced woman, and his early married life in Greenwich Village where, as he tries to produce offspring, he is required to masturbate into test tubes.

Domestic Particulars is not an exhaustive treatise but a series of primary scenes, rich in incident and feeling, that seem to give the temperature of lives, and show the way they have been turning. Busch, who is one of our finest short story writers, is not ashamed of what his characters talk about and say. If they have any dignity it is because they are allowed to speak out of their feelings. Toward the end Mac confesses to Claire, "I'm miserable Claire . . . I'm very unhappy . . . I sometimes think I've lost my life." She thinks, "he was the old man who slept in the bedroom down the hall from me," and, "in spite of his struggling," she pushes her tongue between his teeth as if to make a contact with him their whole life together has denied.

This novel has many such moments when its characters do things we almost wish for the sake of decorum they would not do, and then we realize that it is the same humanness that made them such victims which has now provided them with the gestures to express their victimization. It is an honest, angry, compassionate work, written with all the specificities of technique of the new novelists, but nowhere simply doing things for the sake of showing off. *Domestic Particulars* is committed to its strong subject matter, like people in a hostile integration, and to the air and light of particular days in Brooklyn, or on the upper West Side, to the look of the hills at sunset in upper New York

Richard Elman's latest publications are a book of poems, The Man Who Ate New York (*New Rivers Press*), *and* Taxi Driver (*Bantam Books*).

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State, or the complaining inner voice of Claire as she remembers a friend from her Greenwich Village days: "She introduced me to Eugene O'Neill. Now I talk to janitors and pension clerks. She's old. I don't know where she is. She's ancient. I'm afraid to see her or speak on the phone. There is nothing to say. I wonder how she stays alive. She's alone now. Who isn't?"

This is not just another family novel; we do not come away from it feeling reconciled, or at peace with ourselves. What is radical to the work is its insistence on the separateness of these three lives, its painful understanding that so much was self-inflicted in an indifferent world not out of love but lovelessness, its awareness of bitterness and defeats, without redemption, and its sense of the littleness, the pettiness, the meanness of these characters that does not, oddly enough, demean them but gives them whatever stature they may have.

Publication of this work should bring Busch the larger audience he deserves. Of novelists under 40 in this country, he is one of the very few active practitioners who can combine an astonishing use of language with a really first-rate memory; he is brilliant, imaginative, and more often than not, just. Here, for example, are Claire and Mac discussing the possibility that their son may be gay:

". . . I'm surprised he told us about Stacey."

Mac nodded. "I wonder what Stacey is" he said.

"I don't understand. Oh. No, Mac, really."

"Well. Everything's changing. Everywhere in the world. Why not here?"

"You're saying Stacey's a boy and Harry's a homosexual?"

"No. I'm not. No. But I wondered. Isn't that incredible? I watched his testicles descend, and now—you know, it slimed its way across my mind. What you were saying."

"No."

"No, I don't think so. The worst is that I thought it."

"Could you get used to that?"

"Could you?"

"It's not called a sickness anymore by many intelligent people."

"By queers it's not."

"It's a preference, Mac. A choice, is how we're supposed to think of it. But I don't think Harry's like that."

"Like what?"

"Queer."

"I wanted to hear what it sounded like when you said it. It sounds very strange. In fact, it sounds queer."

"Will you stop making those terrible jokes?"

"Yes . . . But do you think you could get used to it?"

"No."

"No, neither could I. I hope we don't have to get used to anything else."

Claire said "what are we used to now?"

"I guess what we were used to before we had him—you and me."

By such violations of privacy the "domestic particulars" of the three lives of this novel are revealed. No excuses are broached, nor are there any outright slanders. We have the sense, which only fine writers can give us, that the inevitable was a matter of so many breaths taken, looks and glances exchanged, as the dialogue proceeds, and that the misery of these people is a condition of their intimacy as they talk to one another in an echoing emptiness that has been the sole accomplishment left to them of their life together. □

A Mannered Slouch

SPEEDBOAT. *By Renata Adler. Random House. 178 pp. $7.95.*

BLANCHE M. BOYD

For those of us who grew up in the 1960s, those who grew up in the '50s were a strange lot. When I think of the '50s, I think of passivity, intellectual preciosity, the cultivation of grace through despair. Fifties people slouched mentally, they worried about being sophisticated. They drank Scotch or martinis and liked tranquilizers. Fifties people cultivated their disdain.

My generation was forced to deal immediately with the war in Vietnam, and it gave us different values, different characters. Would we be drafted, sit in, burn a building? We argued over the morality of violence, quoted Mao, and insisted we were important. We drank wine and took psychedelics; hard liquor, we said, was bad for you. We notched our belts with being arrested, resurrected our childhood religions with garbled readings of Eastern philosophy, cultivated our commitment. We were contemptuous of the '50s sophistication, the '50s disdain.

I know what happened to those of us who grew up in the '60s. We're into psychoanalysis now, and the women's movement. We're into health food and even more garbled versions of Eastern religions. Some of us burned out our minds completely with drugs, some of us are exiled. We talk now about voting as if it were a revolutionary act.

Renata Adler's novel *Speedboat* gave me a glimpse of what happened to those who grew up in the '50s. *Speedboat*'s title derived from a one-page anecdote about a young woman who, through overenthusiastic response to a ride in a new speedboat, breaks her back: ". . . she exaggerated every happy bounce. Until she broke her back. . . . Martin said How too like life all afternoon." So now I know that the '50s people are still around, as brittle as ever, trying to slouch, so they don't break their backs.

Neither Adler nor her protagonist Miss Fain are in any danger from overenthusiasm. Miss Fain suffers from exquisiteness of sensibility. She has few passionate interests, other than precision in language. Her drugs are Valium and Scotch and martinis. She seems to be an accidental spectator at the events of her own life. Even where it is clear she has made choices, there is a numbness, a passivity. "The first year I ever came to the island, there was no phone and no hot water. Since there was no electricity, there were no lights. I was alone; I had rented a house." Facts are presented without motivation: "I never liked him, and now he is dead. Perhaps I should wish that I had liked him better. But I do not wish it. And I did not like him. . . . The trouble is that he was our candidate, Jim's candidate. It can't be helped. That is all." She does not address the question of why she would be working for a candidate she disliked. That would be a '60s question.

Much of the material in *Speedboat* was published as separate units in *The New Yorker*, where Adler is a staff writer and reporter. Each unit consists of a collection of anecdotes and fragments ranging from two lines to several pages. The order of presentation of fragments in any given unit, and in the book itself, sometimes seems to matter, sometimes does not. Because Adler's subject is fragmentation, because she tries to build, as John Hollander puts it in a dust jacket comment, "a world of anecdotes in which any kind of Whole Story would appear to be a well-intentioned lie," she runs into difficult formal problems.

To give credit, Adler is a brilliant stylist. Her use of irony is assured and often delicate; her sense of humor is finely honed. She does try to weave a

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Blanche Boyd's new novel, Mourning the Death of Magic, *will be published next fall by Macmillan. An excerpt appears in the current issue of* American Review.

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slight narrative thread into *Speedboat*, while keeping her fragmented method. But a novel consisting of fragments, to be successful formally, must be woven carefully. There must be composition, as in music or painting. Otherwise, if one's meaning is about the randomness of experience, and Adler's meaning seems to be this, one falls flat into the imitative fallacy.

The protagonist of *Speedboat*, Miss Fain, is a journalist, "the sort of reporter who hangs around, or rather, tags along." She describes various experiences and reports various stories: about the devoted Doberman Pinscher who finally murders his mistress, about the woman who said she had to steal two blouses at Bloomingdale's because she had no time to wait; about Fain's flying lessons, where the problem is that she lands funny; about islands she has visited, parties she has been to, a rifle she bought and couldn't assemble, about her affairs with the shadowy figures of Will, Aldo and Jim.

When her anecdotes are successful, they refract meaning in a dozen directions. Often they are hilarious. Rarely are they just silly or pretentious or peculiar. The Doberman Pinscher story is an example of Adler's method at its best. Here Adler's protagonist connects her childhood fear of Dobermans (a vicious one in her neighborhood chased her bicycle) to her own preference for dogs "that are large and hairy and friendly and sleep a lot. . . ." No Dobermans for her, certainly. Yet "For years I thought of the devotion of Dobermans to their owners . . . as something almost in their favor. Almost." Then she reads about an old lady who is attacked and killed by her devoted Doberman. The old lady had "run from room to room trying to shut the door before the dog got to her, just too feeble or perhaps unbelieving to escape it." This grotesquely comic anecdote gets its depth from Adler's final comment: "A love story gone off the tracks, one could say in a disillusioned moment. Far off." In a second we glimpse why Fain's lovers are shadowy, undemanding, why she seems to cultivate isolation, why, perhaps, she takes flying lessons.

When I first began to read *Speedboat*, it seemed to me that the book had a chance to be stunning, authentic. In the first three chapters there is a tension in their careful ordering, a silk cord being wound tighter and tighter. In these chapters Adler quietly builds momentum with her seeming randomness, her dispassion, her precision. When I got to the

WINTER LAKE

The lake was not yet frozen
but on its way—with
opaque of winter sky in jack-
frost rhythms: offwhite
flowers rimmed in dustgray.

We know the woods' path from
softer seasons of greens
and bright surprises; that
is why we understand the
tanned stalks bristling now
in east wind, harsh trees
and rustbrown bushes with
tiny shrivelled leaves
curling into themselves.
(Consolingly, you say
the wild ducks have found
covert at lake's end.)
Wind slaps our faces as
we turn, red-cheeked, to
find in each other's glance
the same reeling knowledge.

Etta Blum

end of Chapter 2, where she says

> Suppose we blow up the whole thing. Everything. Everybody. Me. Buildings. No room. Blast. All dead. No survivors. And then I would say, Let's just have it a little quiet around here.

I found I had ridden thirty blocks past my bus stop. To have created a degree of tension where the simple repetition of a phrase, "and then I would say, and then I would say . . ." can convey such pain, such intensity, takes extraordinary technical virtuosity. At that point I thought this talented book had a chance to be a great one. If she could pull that silk cord for another 150 pages, I would be happy to ride the bus all day.

The next chapter was "Brownstone," a somewhat different arrangement of which won the O. Henry Award in 1974. "Brownstone" in either version, comes close to being a perfect piece of writing. The structure of "Brownstone" is arhythmic, jarring. The bones of a self-contained narrative show through in a way that demonstrates, reinforces, the sense of dislocation, terror, absurdity that haunts the tenants of the brownstone Fain lives in. Their landlord has been murdered, and the tenants have changed their locks. They share Valium. Each plays the music that comforts him or her. "We have a kind of orchestra in here." The narrator even gives us a reason for her nonlinear method. "Situations," she says, "simply do not yield to the most likely structures of the mind." Each piece of "Brownstone" adds to the tension. The structure builds toward an ending where the phone rings fifty times in the middle of the night, the narrator takes three Valiums, she thinks she might know who killed the landlord; her moral confusion and numbness are reflected in her uncertainty over whether it matters who killed him. "I think it does, though." The last line is epiphanic: "When I wonder what it is that we are doing—in this brownstone, on this block, with this paper—the truth is probably that we are fighting for our lives."

"Brownstone" seemed a perfect piece of writing and so I got off the bus. There's something I call a "bouncer" in fiction. It's a piece, an episode that bounces the reader right out of a book. A piece that is complete in itself, inserted into a novel, is a bouncer. It cannot be woven into the fabric without making a big lump. I am not talking about an independent episode, though an independent episode, if woven badly, can certainly make lumpy fiction. I'm talking about something formally complete, self-contained, musical, the images and rhythms finished. "Brownstone" is like that. It blows the linear tension in *Speedboat*, and it bounced me right off the bus.

After "Brownstone" the structure of *Speedboat* disintegrates. Selective randomness becomes sloppy randomness. Insight becomes pretension. Precision becomes hair-splitting. What has been moving becomes simply mannered.

I got irritated, I sulked over *Speedboat*. Adler's stylistic brilliance is almost overwhelming. I told myself she is too obviously intelligent to think she can make a virtue of the imitative fallacy. Or is she? I began to think that the raving "advance comments" on the book jacket, by Arlen, Updike, Janeway, Barthelme, Gill, Brodkey, et al., were meant to keep us lesser folk from noticing how badly put together the book is. Anyway, most of them write for *The New Yorker*. Anyway, none of them grew up in the '60s.

I think Adler knew she lost control of her book formally. Otherwise she would not have taken so many wild shots in the last third of the book; she would not have left all these pithy, meaningful clues; she would not have dropped so many keys that don't quite fit. And she would have been able to think of an ending that made sense.

There is, for instance, a phone conversation between Fain and her lover Jim which goes on for several pages; there are interruptions from other voices on the line, telling us rather heavy-handedly about the difficulty of modern

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connections. There is an old man shuffling around who keeps saying "Far from it, far from it." In case we're wondering about the book's disintegration, Fain says, "There are only so many plots. There are insights, prose flights, rhythms, felicities. But only so many plots." She then goes on to list types of plots, and finishes by speculating, "Maybe there are stories, even, like solitaire or canasta; they are shuffled and dealt, then they do or they do not come out." I thought, what a clever rationalization for a failure of form.

The most peculiar aspect of *Speedboat* is its ending. In the last few pages we find, "The idea of hostages is very deep. Becoming pregnant is taking a hostage. . . . I seem to be about to have Jim's child; . . . and the thing is I haven't mentioned it to Jim." I thought, so much for modern exquisite sensibility, so much for innovation of form, revolutionary plots. Let us welcome in a *deus ex machina* and get this author off the hook. One of the final sentences of the book is "All the same, all the same, I think there's something to be said for assuring the next that the water's fine—quite warm, actually—once you get into it." There is absolutely nothing in *Speedboat* that justifies assuring anyone about anything. And to think that one can resolve almost 200 pages of complex suffering, complex perceptions, by tacking on a baby—the protagonist can't even think of it as her own, it's Jim's child—is remarkably naive. It's a cliché one doesn't expect from women as bright as author Adler or protagonist Fain. On the other hand, I've always suspected that under that '50s crowd's brittleness, sophistication, was an innocence the '60s couldn't share. □

Language and the Apocalypse

THERE MUST BE MORE TO LOVE THAN DEATH. *By Charles Newman. The Swallow Press. 217 pp. $8.95.*

ERIC LARSEN

A passage from a long essay by Charles Newman, called "The Uses and Abuses of Death: A Little Ramble Through the Remnants of Literary Culture," published in *TriQuarterly* in 1973:

> Fiction since Joyce has been more a vehicle for the many voices of the intellect and verbal imagination than a story-telling machine. Indeed, it has come to rely upon its own linguistic awareness of itself, rather than plot or character development, to provide its momentum. . . . And whatever else one can say about such self-consciousness, linear sequential omniscient narrative will never be the same again. Or to put it another way, it has become possible again, because it has a much richer context of alternatives, because it is no longer low-grade entertainment or a "classic," but has resumed negotiations with philosophy, politics, and that reopened debate on how we see.

I have chosen to quote this passage not only because it tries to summarize some of the major assumptions underlying a great deal of the new fiction around us but also because it serves well as an approach to Newman's own most recent work, a volume of three short novellas, *There Must Be More to Love Than Death.* For these three pieces are certainly more, as Newman says, than "story-telling machines," yet they do maintain the satisfaction and allure of "story." In them one does hear the "voices of the intellect"; just as certainly they are the product of an intensely rich "verbal imagination." And in them, perhaps most of all, one both senses and welcomes those "resumed negotiations" of which Newman speaks. For these are serious, ambitious pieces: nonconformist, they are unwilling to let themselves be limited either in meaning or in scope simply for the conventional reason that they happen to be pieces of short fiction. They *do* negotiate. Their major characteristic is that they continually strive outward; they remain ambitious, extend beyond themselves. At their best, which is most of the time, they take us straight to the heart of the matter.

For what they are really about—beyond their immediate subject matter—is, quite simply, the likelihood of our survival. They are stories woven consciously out of the ominously suspended historical moment in which we happen now to find ourselves not just living but *waiting*. Newman himself, in the same essay I quoted from above, has commented on this sense of waiting as a general characteristic in Amer-

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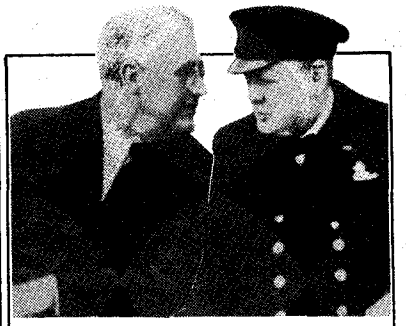

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ican writing. "Recall," he says, "that while every American generation, from the mid-19th century at least, has described itself by its peculiar *myth of deprivation*, . . . we should note how these were invariably united around a single recurrent theme—their existence *between* realities, a *transitional* age. As Whitman had it, echoing Matthew Arnold, 'society waits unform'd, and is for a while between things ended and things begun,' which is, after all, the quintessential *American* sense of history . . . and our dubious gift to the devolution of Western thought."

It *is* an old theme, it may be a dubious gift, and Western thought may or may not be devolving. But certainly these three novellas have precisely these things as their themes—anxiety, waiting, dread, a simultaneous fear of what may happen and a Beckett-like fear that *nothing* may happen. With his gift for irony, the 13-year-old narrator of the last novella explains it: "We're in the silent trough of some gigantic wave."

The theme can be seen most easily in the initial piece, the novella from which the book as a whole takes its title. Its materials are familiar ones, but they are wrought so skillfully as to provide a good deal more than would readily be expected of them. The piece is about Vietnam. More precisely, it is about characters on their *way* to Vietnam who are never permitted quite to *get* there. The appropriateness of this is clear. The war for these characters (as it was for the nation as a whole) remains something incessantly to fear and dread, something abstract, menacing, guilt-evoking, and terrifying, but not something they are ever permitted actually to *see* and to *know* and therefore, just possibly, to understand and conquer. The war becomes thus the metaphor solely of dread, fear and threat; never is it made understandable, even ironically, in terms of cause, purpose or perceptible meaning. It becomes the gradually intensifying cause of individual self-destruction, of insanity.

George Patek, the central character in the story, lets himself be drafted (he could have gotten out of it), is trained as a medic, ends up in California unloading HRC's (human remains containers) from cargo planes and transferring them to cold storage. His date of transfer to Vietnam is always imminent but never arrives. The strain increases, fellow soldiers break down, disappear, go berserk. Patek himself becomes increasingly unbalanced, addicts himself to morphine, and, in an ending that should be more effective (and, I think, better invented) than it is, stabs the blindly complacent base commander with a syringe containing a double dose of the painkilling, Lethe-like drug.

Little justice, though, can be done to these stories without generous quotation (prohibited here by space) of the prose in which they are written. For it is upon his often brilliant use of language that the quality of Newman's achievement finally depends. It is no accident that language itself becomes a central part of his theme: just as in the writing of so many of the "anti-realists" (with whom Newman, as critic and editor, is deeply familiar), Newman's own writing also comes to be *about* writing, his language *about* language. The second novella in this volume, "The Five-Thousandth Baritone," concerns a voice student, Gerald Fox, who supports his graduate studies by working as a regional salesman for the Cranach Cutlery Company. A small comic masterpiece (moments in it are as vivid and funny as *Lucky Jim*), the story portrays Gerald Fox as an intelligent, perhaps idealistically ambitious young singer of opera (" 'Gerald,' Nelly said, 'you don't know what the competition is like. There are 5,000 good baritones in the world at any one minute!' ") frustrated by the slowly devolving culture in which he lives. After casually, if inevitably, seducing the hippie *manquée* daughter of a potential buyer of his cutlery wares, Gerald muses, of all things, on the *language* of his nation:

> God forgive poor Bonny. Gerald was beyond shame. The entire nation had become a gross artifice, an opera in which words were only pretexts to be engulfed in tone and texture, silly little words which had only the most cursory effect upon the action, a little snow fence to give the blizzard of tonalities a name, a frame, a price . . . but no matter how ridiculous when examined isolate, no matter how eventually obscured by spectacle and ingenuous polyphony, still, those little words *once* tugged everything *back* to them. And now those words, entire rhetorics, jargons, librettos, were flying out *away* from the poor singers; Schmar, Selle, Bonny, each with their great balloons of metaphors, clots of locusts, lemmings, dirigibles of stale lozenges, hoofing it out over the horizon, dotting the landscape with great blobs of reprocessed mucous and simulated lava, while "the audience" could only watch in a kind of dignified slouch like Ed Baginski before the *Evening News* gripping a cool Pabst like a grenade, hidden from his prophets and governors, even his progeny, sonic booms of language *preceding* their fragile aircraft. *Boom*, the windows rattle, the septic tanks groan; *Boom* and you look up and *Boom* there be no starfighter, no lunar beauty, but a great balloon of gaseous residue, and quite a while later, taking its own sweet time, comes your Spad, or blimp or pigeon, or maybe the Queen herself astride a bridled swan.

Following this energy—both of perception and expression—the passage ends with the real point: ". . . and then Gerald thought, unlikely for his practical mind, that it is only the sickest societies which let language get out that far ahead of them, and he thought again of Bonny, *Die Winterreise* racing away from her, and for the first time since his bad car wreck, Gerald Fox cried."

The final novella carries the theme even farther; for though we may be doomed already to massive self-destruction, a good part of the cause will be our failed reverence for the humble and invaluable truth of language well respected. Our most valuable possession, after all, is the one we treat most crudely. Nor is this merely the hobby-horse of the teacher of English: for the truth is that only through language does experience gain meaning; and *meaning* —I meet all arguments to the contrary —is made *meaningful* to us only through language. Without language, Newman tells us—*able* language—we are all the more assuredly doomed.

The third novella is in some ways the weakest of the three, perhaps precisely because its aim is the highest, the most elusive. In it there is the strongest element of what may as well be called science fiction, for the piece is set after the atomic holocaust—or some equivalent—has occurred (" '*Our* holocaust was not collective,' as my favorite teacher, Mr. Howe, says' "). Here we find the narrator mistaking video tapes of Jane and Tarzan for "history"; imagining that tapes entitled *MacArthur Returns* are "a family series probably"; and observing that "the government had built amphitheatres" around old missile silos, "declaring them national monuments. . . ." This is the stuff of minor science fiction indeed, and, though it both jars and intrudes, one forgives it in light of Newman's real aim: to create a metaphor for the implicit destructive potential of America's *cultural* failures.

"A Dolphin in the Forest, a Wild Boar on the Waves" describes the journey by foot, on the cold day before Christmas, of two young brothers through the desolation of a grim post-holocaust, futuristic suburbia to visit their pregnant and unhappily married sister. This particular journey of the

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wise men (the younger brother is burdened with photographic recall of everything he has ever read) results in no divine birth but only in the sister's casual fellation of the younger brother on the floor of the newspaper-strewn basement in which she lives. On the return trip other religious ironies occur when the brothers encounter three monks beating a rabbit to death, and a small boy, in the middle of an empty field, making the shapes of angels in the snow with his arms and legs.

Still, the strengths of the piece, again, cannot be revealed in a summary for, like the others, it too is a story that lives primarily *in* its language. One of its major themes, as well, is once again language—more specifically, the phenomenon of language, through abuse, neglect, or design, becoming isolated from meaning ("silly little words which had only the most cursory effect upon the action"). Thus the setting of the aesthetically depleted, authoritarian state becomes understandable and appropriate; and thus the desire of the young narrator to be freed from his "gift" of verbal recall becomes understandable as well: his "memory" gives him no meaning. He is better off with nothing at all, for the ticker tape of words that passes before his eyes merely replaces one absence with another. Language gives no meaning to experience; it does not translate experience into meaning.

Once language fails in this way, we effectively lose whatever control of our world we might previously have had. Unrooted from meaningful language, experience itself becomes random and gratuitous. The world is no longer directed or shaped: it merely happens, and we, helpless, are cut adrift in it, confused and without direction (notice the odd inversion of the novella's title). The radical premise upon which the truth of the Orwellian nightmare is based becomes conceivable: one thing is *not* more meaningful than another.

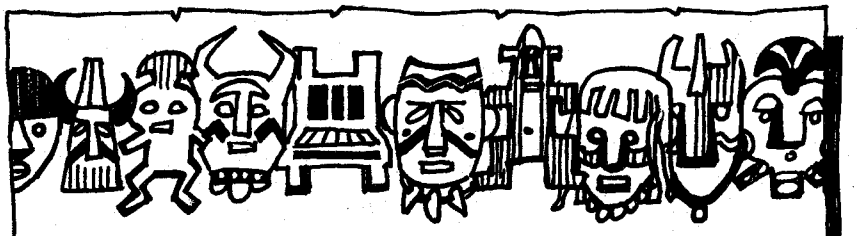
In speaking of his older, sadistic and silent brother, the narrator of "A Dolphin in the Forest" puts the idea into other words:

> Out of cold and boredom I began to speculate on my mute brother, whom, if you didn't know him as I do, you might simply write off as a murderous shit. There was something in his forgetfulness, a "cruel indifference" as the old books say, "a menace to society" according to the new ones. Oh well, all our books are wrong. And I cannot really speak for our experience. We have had no experience to speak of. Or rather, the only experience we've had has been bespoken.

Bespoken, we understand, in the language of the state, of exhaustion, in language that no longer makes distinctions. " 'All stories are the same, except for the differences,' like Dad says, '20 years growing, 20 years living, 20 years stooping, and 20 dying.' It's not exactly that nothing's now symbolic, it's just that everything seems to smell the same."

Precisely. And thus we come around to the essence of it: as writers, we must struggle to create meaning out of materials provided us by a world in which "everything seems to smell the same." It is the writer's task, like the thinker's, to make distinctions between things, to evaluate, to study and reveal the differing and related meanings of differing and related experiences. The difficulty of doing this is increased almost insuperably in a world that strives to negate such distinctions, eliminate the relativity of meanings, and that values as one of its primary devices a language increasingly designed to serve, through powerlessness, its ends.

This book, Newman's fourth, will almost undoubtedly be classified by many



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Queens College, City University of New York

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—even in their praise—as esoteric, unconventional, even abstruse. But it may be that it has never been more difficult to write significantly than it is now—the questions are so big, the available materials within which to approach them so exhausted. The following passage appears in Newman's title novella, a description of one Sergeant Hatchette:

> A southern mountain man, sandy cowlick like a plume sprouting from behind his flight cap. Eyes washed blue, mica geist in the bottom of a mountain stream. Issue of men who have been drained because too much has been written about them.

The passage suggests the nature of the dilemma: the writer's material, the fictional possibilities of his world, are "drained," yet the importance of writing seriously about them is perhaps greater than ever. For our world is one of enervated banality and at the same time one of immense, even unimaginable, dangers and risks. The difficulties are evident, the dangers those of defeat or hysteria. Charles Newman is one of the writers, whatever his weaknesses, who at least shows us a way, in the face of these paralyzing contrasts, neither to go mad nor to give up entirely. In this richly controlled book, he does not resort merely to screams, yet he shows us how not to remain entirely silent. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

The Memory of Justice—Michael Wood, writing on Marcel Ophuls and his work in *The New York Times Magazine* (October 17) suggests, remembering Plato, that the title of the director's latest film refers to "that ghostly reminiscence which makes us believe we know what justice might be, even if we don't see it practiced much about us."

If that is so, we must not complain because, in this work of documentary reconstruction and filmed interviews, so rich in its portraiture, so unsparing in its recollection of old horrors and others not so old, so dedicated to serious (for the most part) conversation about grave matters, the image of justice itself does not emerge in a form one can grasp and use. Indeed, it is not surprising: justice is an abstraction, it is that feeling of satisfaction (rare enough) one experiences when the ethical equation is seen to prove out. Try to define it, try to isolate it from its case in point, and—like happiness, that other ubiquitous abstraction—it eludes you.

Thus it turns out that what *The Memory of Justice* is about is not justice; it is about guilt and the authority to punish it. With the courtroom of Nuremberg as its great central stage set, it examines from a host of angles and in time contexts from 1945 to the present, the crimes of those survivors of Hitler's Reich who appeared as defendants before a court convened by the four principal victorious powers. Sir Hartley Shawcross, who was the chief prosecutor for Great Britain and whom Ophuls interviews at length, makes one trenchant observation (he makes others that are less happy, if glaringly self-revealing). Referring to a complaint often heard at the time that, after all, this was a case of the winners passing judgment on the losers, Sir Hartley observes that it is *always* the winner who passes judgment. The common criminal pays his "debt to society," which has defeated him. For our comfort, we assume that the society is honest, whereas the criminal is not; but it need not be so, and the only difference will be in the nature of the crime and the punishment therefor. The winner will still judge.

Having registered that point, the film devotes a great deal of time to showing how the guilt of the defendants was established and to arguing whether those who sat in judgment (not the men but the powers they represented) comprised a sufficiently honest society to give them the right, as well as the power, to do so. Does Dresden cancel Coventry; how many My Lais equal a Katyn; should the nation that was soon to send paratroopers into Algeria have presumed to assign blame for Dachau? The effect of this expansion of the frame is to suggest that guilt is virtually universal; so much is this so that at the end Yehudi Menuhin is heard to say that only the guilty can properly pass judgment on themselves. It is a humane sentiment from a notably humane man, but it also obliterates the problem. If guilt is a universal characteristic, it falls into the same category as mortality—about which, notoriously, nothing can be done.

This nagging moral flaccidity pervades the film, I think, because Albert Speer so dominates it. Speer was probably the smartest of the Nuremberg defendants and from the start he took a clever line. He was guilty, he was ashamed, he was repentant—*but* he had been tempted beyond his powers to resist, for he was only a man, subject to the frailties of humanity. It worked with the judges (Speer got off with a comparatively light sentence); it worked with his book, *Inside the Third Reich*, which to judge by his present surroundings, has provided handsomely for his years of retirement, and though I'm sure Ophuls despises him, it casts a greasy pall over *The Memory of Justice*. The abominable Speer manages to set the tone for the picture, as the ebullient, witty, indomitable Mendès-France set the tone for *The Sorrow and the Pity*, that superb Ophuls treatise on the varieties of courage and what we may demand of our friends, given what people we ourselves are.

The dramatic momentum of *The Memory of Justice* stems from juxtaposing the horrors committed by the Nazis, particularly the horrors of the concentration camps, with intimate studies of the people who perpetrated them, both as they were at Nuremberg and as they are today. But this painful excitement, I think, displaces the significance of the trials. They did not define crime in the context of war; the deeds of which these people were accused have always been crimes in any context. And they are not memorable for having determined the complicity of the defendants in those crimes; with very few exceptions, their complicity was manifest before the court convened. The real purpose of Nuremberg was to establish responsibility, and in that respect it has been a greater success than the film makes evident. Too much time is spent with Telford Taylor, an old soldier whose tactic is to concede a little in order to save a lot; with Shawcross, whose legal disposition is prey to his ruling-class assumptions; on the natural satisfaction of hearing from the surviving victims of the extermination policy how they were avenged upon their torturers.

Meanwhile, the real principals of the film stand, as it were, in the wings. They are the young men who, at the time of Vietnam, went to Canada, to Sweden, or to jail; the young French paratrooper who, on a foray deep into the Sahara, deserted from his company in order to guide to safety an Algerian captive who had been marked for murder. Nuremberg set down the axiom that every man, every woman is responsible for his and her actions, and that orders from a higher authority will not be accepted as an excuse, when the deed itself is inexcusable. The AWOLs and draft evaders of our most recent war may never have heard of Nuremberg; quite possibly the young Frenchman never did, but the idea that responsibility is personal is now in the air. Vietnam was not the first unjust U.S. military adventure, nor was Algeria the unique blot on France's honor. The amount of principled resistance, however, was new. So, though I share

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Daniel Ellsberg's indignation that only Calley, the lowest of the low, was brought to book (if one may call it that) for My Lai, I notice also that he and I agree that retribution should have gone, step by step, up to the top. It used to be said that the man at the top didn't know and the men below him were only obeying orders. That won't work any more—and I think that from all the evidence that *The Memory of Justice* amasses on the prevalence of wickedness in the world, it might have plucked this one nugget of hope that for man improvement is possible, though justice may ever elude his grasp. It is there in the film, but it is not made to shine. One comes from the theatre, or at least I did, depressed by being made to endure once more the smug self-abasement of Speer, the lying truculence of Doenitz, the effective arrogance of Goering, and the latter-day hairsplitting of the legal celebrities who passed judgment on them. Ophuls is a master film editor; it is commonly conceded that he can make four hours or more of taped interviews into a mesmeric film by his genius for timing, his appreciation of the witty, ironic or revelatory possibilities of juxtaposition. He works that magic in *The Memory of Justice*; it is an absorbing film. Nevertheless, I found myself editing it again in my mind to create a document which would celebrate the fact that those now-elderly lawyers who sit somewhat complacently for Ophuls's portrait camera did in fact change the basic ethical equation at Nuremberg. □

FILMS & PLAYS/Harold Clurman

The fourteenth New York Film Festival ended happily with two admirable and highly contrasting presentations: *The Marquise of O . . .* and *Harlan County U.S.A.*

Heinrich von Kleist who died a suicide in 1811 at the age of 34 is a classic author of German literature. His life was agonizingly hectic, but though he wrote several heroically tragic plays his work also contains a brilliant comic vein. "Man can be great in grief," he wrote, "but only in happiness is he a god." In *The Marquise of O . . .*, one of his finest stories, humor subtly tinged with irony proclaims his ambivalent genius. There is a sort of "Mona Lisa" smile about it: affection, mockery and a faint note of anguish are all contained in it. The result is a clear, classic surface which induces chuckles and yet remains unaccountably disturbing. The French director of *My Night at Maud's*, Eric Rohmer, has literally transcribed the story to the screen and in doing so has wrought his best film.

I have used the word "classic" in several of its connotations. There is still another I would apply to it here: it is a work of art so limpid and serene that one can hardly tell what it is about! Though there is no obscurity at all about the plot, the final impression created is not of a tale but of a mood or "music." The classic in this sense hides itself, it does not declare its point. It simply is.

Yet much happens. The widowed Italian Marquise, a mother of two small children, has vowed never to remarry. During a Russian invasion (the time is the 18th century) the Marquise is rescued from the soldiers' rape by a gallant officer of the invading army who is a Count. Some time later the Count reappears and, to everyone's astonishment, offers to marry the Marquise; what is more surprising, he urges that the marriage take place without delay. The Marquise and her parents, the father a Colonel in the defeated Italian Army, suggest that the Count wait till the Russian campaign, which is to continue in other parts of Europe, is over. He is obliged to agree.

In his absence the Marquise begins to suspect pregnancy. It is incredible to her and is deemed absurd by her mother because the Marquise, the soul of honor, knows herself to be totally innocent. But her pregnancy soon becomes evident as a fact. Abjured by her horrified parents, she is forced away from her home. . . . We realize from the first that the Count must be the unborn child's father: he has taken her while she was unconscious through having had a sleeping draught administered to her after the shock of the attempted rape. I need not go on further with the odd events that follow, except to say that everything turns out satisfactorily for all concerned.

Kleist both accepts and teases the moral standards of the time. Ever so gently set forth is the incalculability of human destiny and the childishness of our behavior in regard to it. What gives the picture its special quality is the sober beauty of every shot, movement, setting, costume, performance. There is hardly any emphasis of detail: every moment is complete in itself. If the narration were to be suddenly arrested we would still feel that we had become part of a living experience, equivocal and fascinating like so much which goes unnoticed in our day-to-day traffic.

A German critic has found something of Kafka in Kleist. For my part, I find the film's "surface," pictorially and dramatically, so direct, burnished and *light*, that it eludes explanation while it says all. The acting by the entire company is flawless. Besides the excellence of each of its individual members, all of them have been associated in a permanent theatre ensemble. It shows.

Harlan County U.S.A. is by no means perfect. Experts on the matter of documentary film may find reason to carp. It is nonetheless a moving, noble and most important picture. Its young director, Barbara Kopple, spent four years in its making. It is the record of a strike which endured that long in the coal fields of Kentucky.

We see the miners at their fearsome work; their homes, their wives and children; the bosses and their representatives; the town sheriff; the intrepid women on the picket lines; the gun-toting thugs who stand by to see that the scabs pass by the embattled and unarmed strikers on the way to the pits; the police equipped with machine guns; the head of the Federal Bureau of Mines who shamefacedly informs us that the conditions for safeguarding the miners' health in the United States are far inferior to those in any other industrially developed country.

Since the strikes in the same territory during the 1930s—to which some of my literary friends tried to lend their moral support—I have kept hearing of the troubles there. But I had not seen or felt them. Through the film we become intimate with the doughty participants—the bereaved mothers, the rough, hardy men, the tough, the scruffy, the scrappy—and we (or perhaps more precisely I) feel embarrassed for having been so long apart from them, though in a sense we all live off them.

There are even certain comic aspects in the picture. There is, for example, a conversation between a miner sent to New York to elicit aid and a cop who can hardly imagine a strike lasting for years. Since the cop had not previously seen any pickets he thought the strike had only begun a day before. The strain, the hardship, the grit and determination of the conflict which finally bursts into the strikers singing "Whose side are you on? Whose side are you on?" finally becomes inspiring as well as pro-

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Social Policy Special Issue
November/December 1976

Older Persons

Unused Resources for Unmet Needs

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foundly instructive. I recommend the film to everyone—but particularly to those not overwhelmed by aesthetics or the comfort of philosophic pessimism.

Grotowski has written and I and many others have endlessly repeated "the text per se is not theatre." Various reviewers have been harsh about the old wheezes and unmemorable tunes on which *The Club*, "A Musical Diversion" is based. (Circle in the Square, 159 Bleecker Street.) But the pleasure to be reaped from this entertainment is in the staging and in the nature of its cast.

Even in saying this, I am not being quite accurate. All the songs, collected or arranged by Eve Merriam, have been culled from the period 1894-1905 and the jokes are of the same vintage. They are as laughably silly as they can be because the aim of the show, aside from pleasant pastime, is to poke harmless fun at the male chauvinism of an earlier day. Thus the pretended location of the evening's affair is one of those stuffy clubs where yesteryear's affluent gentlemen spent their idle hours. Inanity of words, songs and behavior is part of the jest.

It would not work if the show, modest in everything but price, were not so stylishly directed by Tommy Tune and so delightfully performed by seven ladies in masculine full dress. He has placed them on a runway, on the stage and on all sides of the theatre, singing, tap dancing, silly-assing with sprightly airiness and cute deviltry. There is one "man-woman" with a noticeably good voice, two "bellboys" who do almost everything well, there is another who looks very much like the good-natured but fatuous rip typical of the habitués of such clubs, and others who resemble the rakishly handsome bachelors devoted to the bubbly frivolities of their class. I had a good time. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

The beginning of New York's dance season finds the Joffrey Ballet reviewing its twenty-year history. Such ballets as Gerald Arpino's *Olympics* and *Sea Shadow*, Alvin Ailey's *Feast of Ashes* and Robert Joffrey's *Astarte*, that multimedia sensation of 1967, have been brought out from storage on the assumption, or hope, of their being oldies but goodies. A sentimental impulse this, but then sentimentality has always been as much a signature of the Joffrey Ballet as the revived ballets supposedly are. Joffrey audiences seem to feel an irrational fondness for the City Center, perhaps because coping with that theatre brings back not so much memories of the great blackout or the New Year's subway strike but retrospective feelings of the cozy pioneer spirit. Of all the dance companies to have performed on the City Center's squat stage, only the Joffrey has looked truly at peace in its homely and somewhat dysfunctional surroundings. Too, the Joffrey, often as much a team as a company, has always capitalized on that spirit, indeed, on the concept of spirit, by accenting with more or less emphasis its "American-style" youthfulness. Today, the Joffrey dancers are no younger than those of any other company, but whereas youth in other companies is a prerequisite for the agility and stamina dancing demands, and institutional youthfulness something to overcome, the youth of the Joffrey

National Planning (Continued from page 466)

July, he defined himself as "an engineer, a planner, and a businessman." And at several points in *Why Not the Best?* he defines himself with those three words.

These bits of evidence join with other signs to suggest a climate more receptive to national planning than that of any previous era except, perhaps, World War II. Set off against all this are the old doubts about planning, and they run deep. Conservatives specialize in this attitude, although some of them, as I noted, are changing their minds. But even the liberals remain wary and—because they have never thought much about it—decidedly confused. Since for thirty years "planning" was allowed to be a word synonymous with the gray socialism of Eastern Europe, liberals like everybody else have not done the elementary thinking required to become familiar with the decisions required to design indicative planning. And they remain unconvinced that the public has actually accepted all this recent talk of planning.

And how does one square the party's new stress upon less government and lower expectations, so rewarding at the polls, with the Humphrey-Hawkins style of planning? For that bill begins with promises to raise your expectations—a 3 per cent unemployment rate in four years, Jobs For All! And it requires a new planning apparatus which the bill's sponsors estimate will cost $50 million to establish. In a party stirring with an anti-Washington mood, is a wide embracing plan for full employment a conceivable policy?

It is extraordinarily hard to foresee the outcome of this tug of war within the liberal community between its growing if somewhat unfocused understanding of the need for planning and its sense that the political climate will not support the bold use of governmental power to solve social problems. Carter, if he wins, will face the same problems that have shaken confidence in all classes, and Washington, when he arrives, will be jammed with a tumult of reform-oriented people with reserves of energy, ideas and self-confidence not seen even in JFK's day. But whether there will be merely an explosion of activities or a disciplined, coherent drive for integrative structural reforms cannot be foreseen. Many elements in Carter's background suggest the latter.

As I have said, we will have to have more planning, and better soon than late. But if it comes soon, it will have to be planning designed so as to possess qualities thought harmonious with the planning ethos as we understand it—qualities of modest scale and expectation, meaningful decentralization and public participation, leanness of bureaucratic encumbrance, openness in operation. That is a tall order, but in the abstract there is no reason why planning in America might not have these qualities. They have been the dream of every American planner since the 1930s—John Dewey, Franklin Roosevelt, Rexford Tugwell, Lewis Lorwin, John Kenneth Galbraith, Hubert Humphrey. However, the conservatives are right at least in this: it has never been done. □

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is sanctified as a quality. This puts the company in a peculiar situation. It is perpetually galloping to the threshold of maturation, yet perpetually clinging to an age of innocence at the not so innocent age of twenty. How else could a company bring back ballets it cut its teeth on and present them with as much conviction as it brings to the historical-interest ballets of Massine and Jooss? How can it not distinguish between intact hand-me-downs (like Ruthanna Boris's *Cakewalk* and George Balanchine's *Square Dance*, both of which have also come up for revival this season) and disreputable tatters of juvenilia, like *Feast of Ashes* and the Arpino pieces? After lugging oneself through the melodrama Ailey made out of Lorca's *House of Bernarda Alba*, *Olympics*'s pathetic embodiments of male virtuosity in the guise of gymnastics and torch-bearing heroism, and *Sea Shadow*'s mushy foray into underwater ballet, starring that professional waif, Lisa Bradley, the kindest conclusion to draw was that management had made a mistake. But all too often I feared that these dips into the past were a boast of what the company intended not to outgrow. Our diapers are our strength.

Astarte's problems are of quite another nature. At worst, the revival could be interpreted as a nostalgic return to acid rock, screeching and blinding discos, and the mixed-media genre, but even then it could not have the *chutzpah* implicit in revivals whose only subject is, This is Your Life, Joffrey Ballet. Actually, for all its aroma of the good ol' days, *Astarte* is still a definitive example of technology well used. Had multimedia theatre turned out to be important, *Astarte* would be considered a classic. Serving the form instead of himself, Joffrey minimized choreography so that live dance and filmed dance could exist without conflict of interest. *Astarte* washes over the audience in true psychedelic style because the audience never has to struggle with decision, or alert itself to complexities that reach beyond the technological. *Astarte* is purposefully mindless.

Judged by its first performance in several years, *Astarte*'s failure lies with the dancers and therefore is open to remedy. Back in her original role as the sex goddess, Trinette Singleton is, alas, some ten years older—a bit thicker in the arms and thighs and technically thicker too. Nothing can be done about that, but Singleton could yet recapture the almost bovine impenetrability she once brought to the role, a quality that was and still could be in fascinating contrast to her exquisitely delicate, and quintessentially white, facial features. Dermot Burke now plays the man who is first mesmerized, then brutalized, then lobotomized by the impassive fertility figure. At present he too lacks stoicism, concentration, but his pretty-boy face is wrong conceptually. Although *Astarte* is plotted as a sexual encounter, its heart has always been a racial encounter; it is race, rather than sex, that has made *Astarte* succulently dirty. Maximiliano Zomosa, the original victim/assailant of the white goddess, was so ugly yet powerful in presence that he was beautiful, terrifyingly so. A Chilean, he was nevertheless *the* black rapist of one's dreams. Christian Holder, Zomosa's successor, had none of Zomosa's power and transcendent ugliness, but he is tall and, in fact, black. Burke's face and temperament have no place in a den of iniquity. He could no more think of penetrating the iceberg than the hero of a Simon comedy. Right now *Astarte* is more improbable than scandalous.

Square Dance and *Cakewalk* are just as wonderful as they have ever been. Although one may associate them with the New York City Ballet in its youth, when that company was biding time at the City Center with good grace, and although it is difficult to imagine *Cakewalk* and the nonstop banter of *Square Dance*'s caller in the present City Ballet, these ballets almost evade the entire issue of age by being first and foremost jovial. Gottschalk is a veritable trampoline for the cakewalkers, their minstrel-show format a fine occasion for delightfully silly jokes on magic acts, sylphs and cheesecake. In *Square Dance* the relationship between music (Vivaldi and Corelli) and dance is merely *very* chipper; unlike *Cakewalk*, it does not beckon the audience to get into the act with stomping feet and clapping hands. But its underlying joke is the best I've seen on the dance stage. At one point toward the end the caller describes some particularly busy footwork of the leading lady as "chicken on the fence, scratchin' gravel." And who would deny that he isn't calling the shots for Vivaldi and Corelli as well?

Last May Balanchine revived *Square Dance* for the City Ballet, dispensing with both caller and square dancing. It's a noble ballet now, more "mature," if you will, than the original version danced by the Joffrey. It's even a better ballet, but I don't think I can favor it over the original. A court dance called *Square Dance* strikes me as less amusing than a dance in which Vivaldi and Corelli are placed in a barn. □

AFTER A DEATH

—remembering my father

I am far away from you.
In my front yard the uncontrollable rain
coats leaves and bark
with a medicinal, protective sheen.

What I inherit is impossible:
a car I can't drive,
empty coats in a closet,
a useless middle initial.

I am astonished by my calm.
Have you really left me no pain?
The enormous sky, floodlit by thunder,
recalls your cold home—

the comforting grass,
the black socket of stone
in which you are fixed
like a blind eye, directionless.

Sandra M. Gilbert

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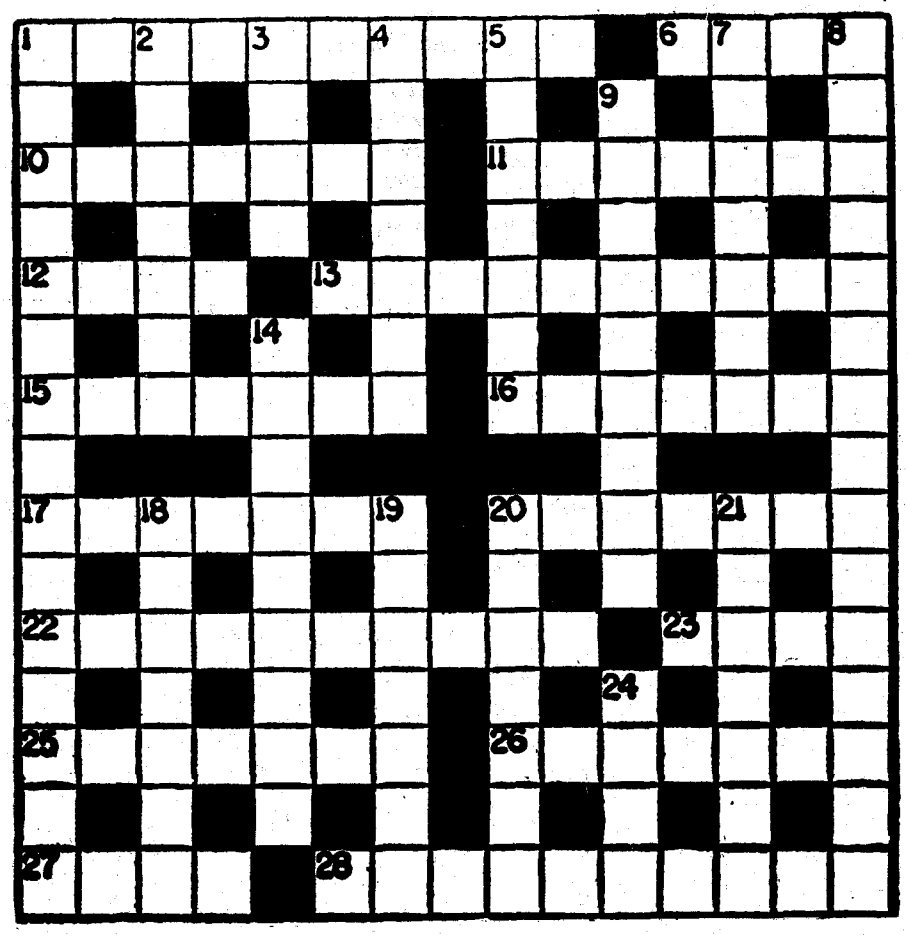
FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 6 What actuaries have done for their bosses? (A chance acquaintance is of some assistance when you take this.) (10,4)
10 Pulling faces might be more dangerous in certain areas. (7)
11 An old mantle to put on when sleep is disturbed? (7)
12 Carry a child everywhere, initially, in this. (4)
13 A drink for Henry's daughter! (6,4)
15 The crash of a trainer turning to land.
16 Such a presentation is still like a piece of furniture to the French. (7)
17 Charge a little mischief-maker with every one taken separately. (7)
20 A close friend to one's construction of great homes. (7)
22 Think a kind expression, in a way, for your friends and relations. (4,3,3)
23 The number of famous Nights repeated for the title role? (4)
25 Such an attack is head-on. (7)
26 A number of politicians possibly found in office as the record-holding type. (7)
27 and 28 Some believe spirits occasionally do, as we might with new property. (4,10)

DOWN

1 Now that my memory is jogged, people planning to attend a ceremony for a memorial occasion might. (4,2,5,2,2)
2 Less heavy smokers might use it. (7)
3 One might be part of the army. (4)
4 Seeing an African go landless, one must find another African. (7)
5 Why should it be a brilliant achievement to take advantage of others? (7)
7 A politician needn't be inherently untruthful to eventually lie this way. (2,5)
8 Equivalent to a suggestion for horse-holding. (4,4,5,2)
9 Indian, or perhaps Yankee, does for a living, and offers some cooperation. (5,4)
14 What might keep one from seeing such as Niagara? (9)
18 One might hold a vessel in line, if that of a learner. (7)
19 Mistakenly hold a G.I. to be someone of importance in Spain. (7)
20 Members of the Establishment who make a point in bringing down prices?
21 A Greek character not in favor of a good drink? (7)
24 Goes out like a shot in two directions. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 1652

ACROSS: 1 and 6 Housemaid's knee; 10 Generic; 11 Avenged; 12 Freshman; 13 Whirr; 15 Omens; 17 Apartheid; 19 Displayed; 21 Runic; 23 Negus; 24 Nuisance; 27 Attract; 28 Hoisted; 29 Edda; 30 Clay pigeon. DOWN: 1 and 18 High and mighty; 2 Unnerve; 3 Earns; 4 Accompany; 5 Drawn; 7 Neglige; 8 End-product; 9 Seawater; 14 Golden Gate; 16 Salesman; 20 Sighted; 22 Necktie; 24 Natal; 25 Alibi; 26 Eden.

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